



# THE INDEPENDENT

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## Hundreds denied urgent treatment because of staff and bed shortages in paediatric intensive care units

# Crisis for Britain's sick children

LIZ HUNT  
Health Editor

At least 300 children have been denied urgent medical treatment in the past year because of a nationwide bed and staffing crisis in paediatric intensive care units, an investigation by the *Independent* has found. Some children have died while others are being cared for in less than optimum conditions on adult wards, or in district hospitals without specialist staff or facilities. Those who were lucky were admitted to intensive care elsewhere. Almost all experienced a delay in getting the treatment they needed.

The *Independent*'s survey shows most big hospitals face a daily battle treating the sickest children in the country, more than two years after health ministers promised to boost intensive care services in response to a damning report from the British Paediatric Association.

Dr Keith Dodd, consultant paediatrician at Derbyshire children's hospital and honorary secretary of the BPA, said last night: "How many children do we have to let die before we prove that intensive care is a necessary part of the service?"

Leeds is particularly hard hit, with some cancer treatments suspended at St James's University Hospital owing to pressure on children's IC beds. Only 11 of 18 IC beds are in use because of financial restraints.

At Leeds General Infirmary one child a day is regularly refused admission to the IC unit. Thirty-one children have been turned away from the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital since September. At the Bristol Children's Hospital, 21 children have been refused admission since November.

London's St Mary's hospital, has referred 41 children with meningitis to other hospitals in the past year. Two died in December after the hospital could not find beds for them.

The British Medical Association and the Royal College of Nursing last night called for immediate action to resolve the crisis, as Labour demanded a freeze on bed closures.

The crisis in children's IC services has particular resonance for the Government. A review of the NHS, announced in March 1988, was triggered in part by the outcry over IC bed closures and a shortage of specialist nurses at Birmingham Children's Hospital. Urgent operations were cancelled repeatedly and two children with heart problems died.

Estimates put the number of IC children's beds at about 220. But lack of specialist nurses means up to 30 per cent may be closed at any one time. Several hospitals in the survey said they had approval for more beds but could not get the nurses.

Medical advances have added to the demand for IC, according to Balal Sethia, director of special services at Birmingham Children's Hospital. Its 12 ICU beds are run at close to 95 per cent occupancy, compared with a recommended figure of 70 per cent. In 1993 the Government ordered a review by all health regions of paediatric intensive care provision, following the first ever national survey carried out by the BPA.

Reports were submitted in December 1994 but no national overview has been produced. The BPA wants a regional network of paediatric ICUs set up with safe ambulance transfer for children, and with care specified and funded within service agreements between purchasers (health authorities and fundholding GPs) and providers.

The British Paediatric Association said Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of State for Health, must make more money available for what is still regarded as a "Cinderella service."

Trusts hospitals had "less incentive" to fund the expensive high-tech beds, Dr Dodd said, or recruit highly-qualified nurses and pay them accordingly up to £20,000 annually.

The RCN said nurses became disillusioned when hospitals refused to fund the extra-training they needed to work in IC, or give them time off to study.

A spokesman for the NHS Executive said last night that it had commissioned a new study on paediatric IC needs, and the Medical Research Council was considering a study to determine the provision of beds. A national computerised bed service was also a possibility.

[Paediatric intensive care] is a specialty that has a variable and predictable demand and we recognise a very considerable peak this year, exacerbated by meningitis," he said.

Death of a child, page 3

## Arafat wins with huge majority

PATRICK COCKBURN  
Jerusalem

Yasser Arafat was elected President yesterday in the first-ever Palestinian general election, which brings the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank close to forming the 23rd Arab state. Mr Arafat was elected with 84 per cent of the vote over a weak opponent in an election that saw larger numbers of Palestinians than expected turn out to vote for him and an 88-member legislative council.

Israel said the election result



President: Arafat yesterday

showed that a decisive majority of Palestinians support the peace agreements signed by Mr Arafat, which have led to a partial withdrawal of Israeli forces from land they captured in the 1967 war.

In a surprise, Israel has agreed to allow Mr Arafat to summon the Palestinian parliament-in-exile to meet in Gaza or the West Bank. Many guerrillas who have fought against Israel belong to the body, the Palestine National Council. Mr Arafat has promised to remove, within two months of the election, a clause in the Palestinian charter calling for the destruction of Israel.

He was in a triumphant mood after his overwhelming

victory and the somewhat less sweeping success of his political movement, Fatah. Unofficial Palestinian Council results for 79 of the 88 seats, gave Fatah 50 seats and the allied Fida party, 2; Independents, 23; Independent Islamic, 2; the National Democratic Coalition party, 1; and the People's Party, 1.

"This is a new era," Mr Arafat said. "It is the first legislative and presidential elections for the Palestinian people. This is the foundation for our Palestinian state."

Mr Arafat's election drew congratulations from world leaders and scorn from Arab radicals. The Israeli Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, telephoned Mr Arafat with his congratulations. "The European Union said the result 'justly rewarded' Mr Arafat's peace efforts. 'I look upon yesterday as one of the historic turning points in the history of Palestine and the Middle East,' said former US president Jimmy Carter, who brokered the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty of 1979, and was an election observer on Saturday.

Iran dismissed the importance of Mr Arafat's victory as shaky and limited by Israel. "Despite Western propaganda, one cannot take the results of these elections as a criterion for the legitimacy of the PLO and the compromisers among the Palestinian people," Iranian radio said.

"This is a false success because the real national council should be one elected by all Palestinians not only in Gaza or the West Bank but also by exiles all over the world," said George Habbash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Apart from Hebron, from which Israeli forces have not withdrawn, Palestinians largely ignored opposition calls for a boycott of the polls.

Vote for legitimacy, page 10



Naomi Campbell modelling a John Galiano dress in Paris yesterday Wild boy, page 2

## Clare Short stirs education row

DONALD MACINTYRE  
Political Editor

Turbulence within the Labour Party over the decision of Harriet Harman, the shadow health spokeswoman, to send her son to a grammar school intensified yesterday with a robust attack by her colleague Clare Short on selective education.

Ms Short's backing for a non-selective education policy came amid strong indications that Ms Harman continues to enjoy the full backing of Tony Blair, the Labour leader, and that he "respects" her decision to send her second son to St Olave's School in Bromley.

Ms Short, Labour transport spokeswoman, said: "They [Ms Harman and her husband] must make the decision for their child and must answer to Harriet's constituents for it."

While denying that the move would "rock the unity" of the party she went out of her way to mount a strong defence of Labour's opposition to selective education.

"Britain's old tradition of having selection and having an elite that do well educationally and writing off most children for a future of unskilled work will not do any more," she said. "The old yearning for selection for some rather than improvement in standards for all will not serve the children of our country or our economic needs. We must do better. We must enhance standards right across the system."

By contrast it was emphasised by other senior Labour sources that they were "relaxed" about Ms Harman's move and that she had not acted "in conflict" with Labour policy because this had left it open to local councils to preserve existing grammar schools. Indeed it was made clear that councils would not be able to abolish such grammar schools without a ballot of local parents - which would be virtually certain to endorse existing grammar schools.

One senior Labour figure



Short: 'We must do better'

Fifty four per cent of the 980 adults questioned in the poll backed a return to grammar schools, secondary moderns and the 11-plus. However, the return of grammar schools and the 11-plus is not supported by the youngest group in the survey - the 18-24-year-olds with the most recent experience of comprehensive education - or by the group most likely to have school-age children - the 35-44-year-olds.

But Baroness Williams, who was the last Education Secretary in a Labour government, while expressing sympathy for Ms Harman, accused Labour of being in disarray.

"I think their dilemma is a real one in the sense that clearly there is a tendency for more money, more resources, better teachers, to begin to move towards schools which are well placed," she said on BBC Radio 4's *The World This Week*. Unlikely rebels, page 2

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### IN BRIEF

#### The 'Independent'

Because of rising costs, in particular newsprint, the weekday price of the *Independent* is increased to 40p from today.

#### Forte rebuked

The Takeover Panel rebuked Forte in a twist to the Granada takeover battle. Page 16

#### Today's weather

Cold, cloudy, with some drizzle or sleet. Section Two, page 25



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## Shapely CDs put music world in a spin

NIGEL WILLMOTT and REBECCA FOWLER

For Tchaikovsky it might be a swan, for the Rolling Stones a pair of pouting lips and for Madonna a basque. You can now have a CD in any shape as long as it's not round.

The launch of multi-shaped CDs was announced this week, following the fluke discovery by two German students that the discs do not need to be round to play. They achieved the breakthrough after attacking an old Kylie Minogue CD with a fret saw.

Mario Koss, 37, studying Chinese and economics, and

Axel Wilhelm, 31, training to be a sound engineer at Berlin's Free University, cut grooves into the CD and discovered Ms Minogue's songs were still intact from start to finish.

"We just wondered what would happen. Now we ask ourselves every day why did no one think of this before," Mr Koss said.

The implications for the marketing of the CD, which has reached sales of 14 billion in its circular form, are endless. Record companies are already commissioning artists for new designs.

A CD has a vast storage capacity, and plays from the inside

out, which means that only a small central circle is necessary to carry up to 60 minutes of music. The rest of the disc is redundant, and Mr Koss and Mr Wilhelm have developed the technique that allows it to be used in different shapes for mass production.

The launch was met enthusiastically at the music industry's annual festival in Cannes last week. A number of experimental copies have already been pressed. The first shaped CD was launched in Germany in the form of a cog wheel.

Burger King produced 1 million copies of a hamburger-shaped dance compilation as

part of a promotion: and David Bowie-shaped CDs went on limited release to launch the singer's latest single.

The computer industry is also experimenting with different shaped CDs, and has produced the most complex design so far, a medieval monster for a CD-ROM game. A car-shaped CD is to follow for a quiz that will coincide with the start of the Formula 1 season.

The fret saw used for the original experiment is now in a glass case in the Berlin office taken over by the two students. They have set up a company to sell their designs, headed by Mr Koss's grandmother.



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# Ashdown hints at Labour PR deal

DONALD MACINTYRE  
Political Editor

The possibility of a new era of coalition in return for a firm commitment by Tony Blair to back reform of Britain's electoral system will be laid out tonight by Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader.

In a key speech, Mr Ashdown will imply that Labour could count on the support of the third party for more than one term if Tony Blair were to put his

weight behind proposals for proportional representation in the referendum which he has promised for the next Parliament.

In language which will inject momentum to the prospects of long term cooperation between the two Opposition parties, Mr Ashdown said he did not believe Britain's needs could be met by a "single party." And while rejecting outright the idea of pre-election pacts, he did not rule out the sort of "mutual

endorsement" floated by the senior Liberal Democrat peer Lord MacNally and intended to stimulate tactical voting.

The move came as party managers moved to play down the impact of the leak of an internal "SWOT" document based on the common business practice of identifying corporate "Strengths and Weaknesses" of the team which is notably frank about the party's needs to make some of its policies - including tax policies more watertight.

In his *Breakfast with Frost* interview yesterday Mr Ashdown said: "Given the wreckage left behind by the Conservative Party, I believe that the things that need to be done to give Britain a modern constitution, to give it a chance in the next century, to put this country right probably cannot be done in a single parliament, probably cannot be done by a single party and certainly cannot be done unless we are prepared to construct a new contract be-

tween politicians and people."

Refusing to be drawn on possible demands for Cabinet seats as a price of support for a Labour government, Mr Ashdown was careful to keep open his options between full support, issue by issue support or sitting on the Opposition benches possibly in the event of a Tory wipeout in the general election as the main opposition party.

"At this moment the important thing is to say what you want for your country, not

whose bum sits on the leather seat in a government Daimler," he said.

But he hinted strongly that he would spell out in detail his terms for supporting a Blair administration in advance of the general election. He will say tonight that he wants the Commons to agree on electoral reform before the proposals are put to a post-legislative referendum of the British people.

Mr Ashdown also made clear that he did not want to

alienate disaffected Tory supporters who were considering turning to the Liberal Democrats in the wake of the defection of Tory MP Emma Nicholson. A Party Political Broadcast directed at wooing disaffected Tories has been prepared for Wednesday.

"I think the Tory Party is now in terminal decay and disarray. Emma Nicholson's defection was, in my view, an event which spoke to tens of thousands across the country," he said.

## IN BRIEF

### Bottomley agrees to lottery talks

Virginia Bottomley, the Secretary of State for National Heritage, has agreed to meet church leaders following concern about the lottery as the lack of a winner for Saturday's jackpot raised expectations of a £40m prize next week-end for the second time this year.

Mrs Bottomley's department and the National Lottery organiser, Camelot, are still reeling from the shock of two double-roll-over draws in a row and criticism of the first mega-jackpot on 6 January when three winners shared £42m.

Representatives of the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, the Methodists, the Baptist churches and the Roman Catholic churches approached Mrs Bottomley because they said the jackpot was too big. The delegation will be led by the Bishop of Liverpool, the Rt Rev David Sheppard.

The winning numbers in Saturday's draw were 23, 37, 33, 30, 25 and 5. The bonus was 3.

### Religious boycott

More than 1,500 Muslim pupils at 40 schools in Kirkcaldy, West Yorkshire, are boycotting religious education classes. Their parents believe the syllabus is too orientated toward Christianity and a Moslem leader warned that the boycott could spread across the country.

### Search for walker

A major search was underway in the Scottish Highlands for a walker who failed to return to his hotel in Kinrossie on Saturday. RAF Kinloss mountain rescue team and Cairngorm mountain rescue team were searching between Newtonmore and Kinrossie, near the winter resort of Aviemore.

### Abduction charges

Two women and three men will appear before Wigan magistrates today charged in connection with the disappearance of a three-year-old girl with her mother after she was placed in foster care by Wigan social services. The girl went missing on Wednesday during a supervised visit to her parents at a family centre in Platt Bridge. She was found safe at a house in Salford, Greater Manchester on Friday.

### Newbury protest

Chainsaw workers on the Newbury bypass site will be confronted by messages from children asking them to spare the trees today. Dozens of young children, as young as five, joined their parents for a Friends of the Earth "tree dressing" demonstration at the weekend, tying ribbons around the oaks and silver birches and pinning poems and letters to them.

### Yacht adventure

A British yachtswoman attempting to sail 27,000 miles solo and non-stop the "wrong-way" round the world completed a dangerous short-cut through the Le Maire Strait in the South Atlantic. Samantha Brewster, 29, who was expected to round Cape Horn early today, is racing in the 67ft *Heath Insured* to beat the record of 161 days set by Mike Golding in 1994.

## The comfortable child-centred home of two unlikely education rebels

Donald Macintyre  
on the firm beliefs of Harriet Harman and Jack Dromey

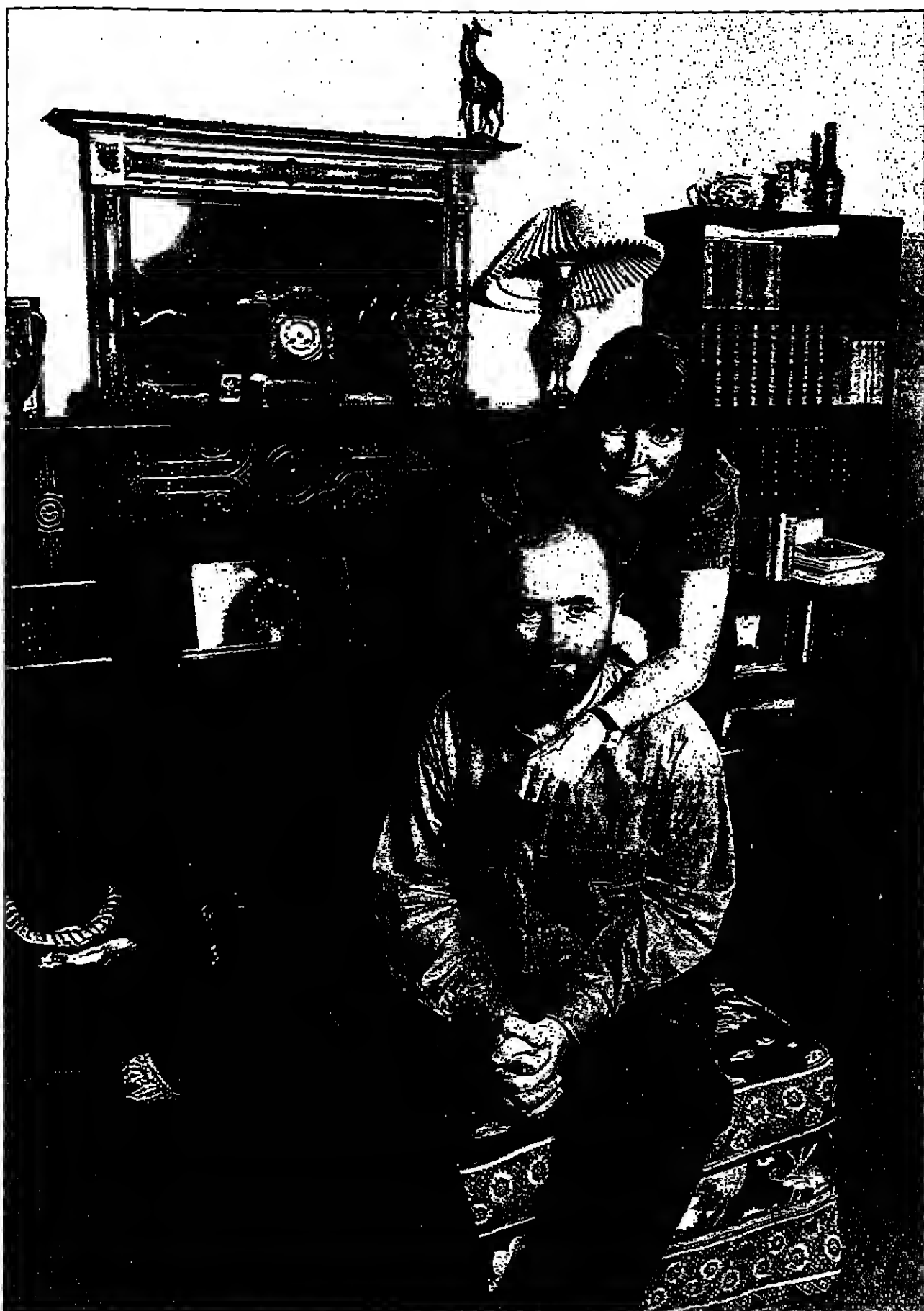
Harriet Harman is said to have told friends that it is sometimes harder to go through "the eye of a needle" than to be at once a good mother and a good politician.

Whether or not she imagined that her decision to send her son, Joseph, to St Olave's, a grammar school in Orpington, Kent, would provoke quite the coverage and turbulence it has, it would be absurd to imagine that she did it without any thought for the risks involved.

On one level, she and her husband, Jack Dromey, are an almost Identikit New Labour couple.

She is a St Paul's-educated lawyer from a professional and liberal middle class family (father a Harley Street doctor, mother an LSE graduate and lawyer) who worked for the Brent Law Centre before going to the National Council for Civil Liberties.

He is a highly articulate trade union official, with a working-class Irish-born father, active in the Labour movement, who



At home: Jack Dromey and Harriet Harman go to great lengths to make time for their children

### Poll support for grammar schools

More than half the electorate wants the Government to bring back grammar and secondary modern schools, according to a poll published today, writes Judith Judd.

The Harris poll, carried out just after the announcement of the Prime Minister's plans to allow schools to select more pupils, comes as the political battle over selection intensifies with the decision by Harriet Harman, shadow Secretary of State for Health, to send her son to a grammar school.

Yesterday the *Independent on Sunday* revealed that Labour is to ballot parents of primary school children in areas with grammar schools about whether they wish to keep them.

Fifty four per cent of the 980 adults questioned backed a return to grammar schools, secondary moderns and the 11-plus. The poll was one of a series commissioned by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers.

was a key figure in the bitter Grunwick dispute in the late 1970s and is now a good deal more likely to use his media skills and powers of argument to further the case of his members than foment a strike.

But although they are both ambitious and energetic, they are also notably active parents, taking care to return home whenever possible and ensuring that one parent is present on evenings when the other - because of the demands of the job - is not.

Their comfortable but uncon-

tentatious family house in Herne Hill, according to friends, is pleasantly child-centred, with plenty of school art on the walls. Harry, 13, Joseph, 11 and Amy, 9, have never been shooed away just because an adult happens to turn up.

And although they have a network of close friends within the party - mainly, though not exclusively, modernisers - they are not grand socialisers in the manner of the late 1950s set of up-and-coming Labour politicians. "Chance would be a fine thing," Ms Harman told an in-

terviewer last year. "Could you tell me when we last went out?"

They are just not flashy "fine wine and rich food" types. In the same interview, Ms Harman described her principles of family life as "utilitarian" - running the household for the good of the greatest number.

Her supporters point out, firstly that St Olave's is a state school, and in a neighbouring borough; secondly, that while Labour is against more selective schools, it has effectively made clear that it will not seek the abolition of existing ones, so that

her decision is not "in conflict" with Labour policy.

One of her difficulties now, at least internally, will be private anger from those Labour politicians who send their own children to comprehensives because they feel for party reasons they have to, and so, in some cases, putting political goals above pure family ones. They may therefore resent Ms Harman's decision to do the opposite.

She has proved an effective and hard-working campaigner, probably now with her ide-

al brief. She deserves a good deal of credit for toughing out demands for an unrealistic figure for the national minimum wage while establishing an ideologically credible case for setting one.

Regarded by Tony Blair as a star, she is certainly on course for high Cabinet office. A first class presenter, she has an engaging sense of humour. Now she may have to draw quite deeply on all her qualities to ensure that she remains known as the able and committed politician she undoubtedly is.

## Radical plan for two-tier state pensions

A radical plan for a two-tier pension scheme is due to be unveiled this week as pressure grows for reform of the provision of retirement income.

After a two-year study, the Retirement Income Inquiry is expected to recommend tomorrow a safety net state pension backed up by a top-up scheme with compulsory minimum contributions from employees and employers.

Publication of the independent inquiry's report coincides with a survey showing that millions of Britons of working age have no idea what their pension is likely to be.

And yesterday Frank Field, the Labour chairman of the Commons social security committee who has proposed radical reform of the welfare state, warned that people should be made to set aside 15 per cent of their income for pensions.

Writing in the *Sunday Mirror*, he said increased saving was the only way to get round public resistance to paying higher taxes to maintain pension levels.

"We are spending fewer years at work, retiring earlier and living longer. We will have adequate pensions only if we set aside more of today's income for tomorrow," he said.

The Retirement Income Inquiry was set up under a former Treasury mandarin, Sir John

Anson, amid concern about how to fund the pensions of a rapidly ageing population.

The number of people of working age for each person of pension age will have fallen to 2.7 by 2030 from 3.3 in 1991. At present basic state retirement pensions for some 10 million people cost £26bn a year, but by 2030 the basic pension is forecast to cost £42bn a year.

Sir John's committee - drawn from business, consumer groups, trade unions, the City and the pensions industry - is expected to recommend all pensioners should be guaranteed a state-backed minimum income in retirement through a new assured pension. Pensioners whose income was below the minimum would receive extra payments from the state.

Employers and employees would also be required to make at least minimum contributions to an individual's pension fund, either through a company scheme, personal pension or a new national scheme.

The need for a public debate on pensions was highlighted by the publication yesterday of a survey by the insurer Eagle Star, a leading provider of retirement income schemes.

It showed fewer than half the people over 18 (46 per cent) had any idea of the pension they could expect in retirement.

## Wild boy brings dreams to life

TAMSI BLANCHARD  
Paris

John Galliano last night took a French bourgeois institution - the house of Givenchy - and turned it upside down with his first collection since taking over at the helm of the legendary couturier last July.

The Givenchy customers of old will be looking elsewhere for their neat suits and elegant evening gowns from now on, because the British designer's debut collection was aimed at whole new class of customer, including Marissa Berenson - granddaughter of the great Schiaparelli - and Paloma Picasso.

Tina Turner sat enraptured throughout and there were dollar signs flashing in her eyes as she was swept backstage for a closer look at duchess satin halternecks with 12ft trains, deceptively simple plain black smoking suits, oriental kimono opera coats, lime green ballgowns and bright red and orange column dresses, made of sari silk.

Model Kirsten McNemey bowed to the rock star's feet at the end of the show to plant a kiss firmly on her lips. The genteel and low-key house of Givenchy that was always the home of restrained, tasteful dressing, has changed beyond all recognition in the



John Galliano: Fantasy

hands of the wild boy. But this was the collection the designer has always wanted to show.

And while his ready-to-wear collections might, in the past, have been irrelevant for everyday life, the fantasy world of haute couture is what he has always dreamed of.

In this context, his clothes, themselves full of references to great moments in fashion history, are a new step forward for haute couture.

The collection also marked the debut of the new face of Givenchy - not Kate Moss or Stella Tennant, but an unknown 16-year-old American, plucked by Galliano from a film audition. Ramsey Jones, from Tampa, Florida, has signed an exclusive contract.

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# Murdered mother 'fled to women's refuge'

IAN MACKINNON

A mother who was killed along with her four children had sought sanctuary in a refuge for battered women in another city after fleeing their home, it emerged yesterday.

The woman, aged 35, who died on Saturday after she was stabbed in the car park of Birmingham New Street railway station, had moved 150 miles from

the multi-racial area of Montpelier, Bristol.

She died in a during a row with a man as her two-and-a-half-year-old son, who was later found strangled in the back of a car, was due to be handed over as part of a custody arrangement.

Several hours later police broke down the door of the family's home in West Grove, Bristol, and found the bodies of

three other sisters, aged 14, 11 and nine, dead in their beds.

Last night a 38-year-old man, believed to be the woman's husband, was still being questioned by detectives in Birmingham, after being treated in hospital for cuts to his wrists.

Two other boys, believed to be from the same family, escaped the tragedy and were being cared for by their grandparents.

Detectives know the man and woman met at noon on Saturday, when the child was passed to the man at New Street station. In the next two hours the young boy was strangled and left in the car before his mother was stabbed to death.

Yesterday, a businessman told how he tried to save the woman, launching himself at her attacker with his bag until a po-

lice woman disarmed him. Harry Robinson, 48, a financial consultant who served in the Royal Signals regiment, was meeting his wife at the station.

"As I came out of the station I scanned across the car park for my wife's car and I could see directly in front of me an Asian man with a woman at his feet," he said. "He appeared to be punching her and kicking her. I was going to say something to

him, shout at him, when I realised there was a very large knife in his hand. I ran towards him, and as I did so, I raised my bag and threw it at him. That knocked him back only about 6ft, against a car.

"He still had the knife in his hand, he came forward again and I thought he was going to come for me. I lifted my bag to defend myself but he totally ignored me and went towards the

woman again. I launched forward and threw my bag at him, which knocked him back again.

"Then the police officer arrived at my side and was shouting at him. I don't know whether he dropped the knife or whether she hit him but the knife fell to the ground."

PC Jill Spencer, 21, gave the woman first aid as other officers arrested the man. The woman was taken to hospital but was

pronounced dead on arrival.

Detective Superintendent Malcolm Ross, leading the inquiry, said: "The whole issue is very probably domestic."

He said the woman had left her Bristol home months ago and moved to the refuge in Edgbaston, south of Birmingham's city centre. "She was living in a refuge to try to give her some respite from some on-going domestic problems," he said.

**Intensive care crisis: Desperately sick children pay the price as health managers struggle to balance books**

## Death of a child returns to haunt the NHS

LUZ HUNT and JASON KERRIGAN

This week the ghost of Baby Barber returned to haunt the health service. Few people will remember his short, troubled life, but for the 57 days David Barber survived in the winter of 1987, he was at the centre of a political furore.

His case was a major factor in the Government review of the NHS which prompted sweeping reforms and resulted in the introduction of the internal market.

Baby Barber was the desperately sick child whose urgent heart operation was postponed five times because of a shortage of intensive care nurses at the Birmingham Children's Hospital. When eventually he had his operation, he lived just 11 days.

Nine years on, as the Independent's survey reveals, there are many potential Baby Barbers being denied a bed in paediatric intensive care units around the country. Some children have died. Ironically, the changes within the NHS now work against the Government taking action to resolve the problems. It is, health ministers argue, a matter for individual trusts to resolve by balancing their budgets.

But as the survey shows, demand far outstrips supply. It is worse in the winter and has been aggravated during the past two months by the meningitis scare, but virtually every hospital we spoke to reported problems throughout the year. The situation nationally is becoming increasingly desperate.

At St James's University Hospital in Leeds, a spokesman said that some cancer treatments had been postponed because "we have been unable to cope" with the demand from very sick children. "We haven't turned anyone away although we have received two patients



Short and troubled life: David Barber lived for just 57 days, and his death following heart surgery postponed five times prompted a political furore over paediatric care

from hospitals in Manchester. We have 11 beds in use in ICU [intensive care unit] but have 18 available to us which we can't use because we can't afford it."

At the Leeds General Infirmary children have been turned away "frequently in the past few months, often one a day," a spokesman said. "One kid was brought here DOA [dead on arrival] from Manchester. There are five paediatric ICU beds. It would be a big problem for us to find staff for any new beds."

In London, St Mary's Hospital has had to refuse admission to 41 children with

meningitis in the past year. Two died in December after the hospital could not find beds for them. Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children is under added pressure because of its specialist status. However, of 19 ICU beds only 11 are open, largely because of staffing problems. About 150 children have been turned away this year.

At the Brighton Health care NHS Trust, seven children have been turned away in the last three months, one with meningitis. A spokesman said: "We could not find the extra staff to cope even if we had more beds."

At the Bristol Children's and St Michael's Hospital, three children were refused treatment in November and 18 in December. One little boy was taken to Birmingham last month because there were no beds; a spokeswoman said: "We have 12 beds in [paediatric] intensive care of which there are 10 currently in use. We are having difficulty recruiting staff."

The Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital at Alderley, said it has had to turn children away on "several occasions". There are 11 staff vacancies in paediatric IC at Manchester

Children's Hospital and the trust is recommending that children are taken elsewhere. "We've been forced to refuse 31 kids since September 1995," a spokesman said. "Our human resources have been pulling out all the stops to find staff but it is very difficult."

Despite investing £500,000 in paediatric intensive care (IC) and opening two more beds, Sheffield Children's Hospital turned away 52 children between October and December last year, and 10 so far this year. At Newcastle General Hospital a spokeswoman said there had

been no refusals as such but "we are often having to send kids on after initial assessment and emergency treatment". In Birmingham paediatric IC cases are "juggled" between the Children's Hospital, Heartlands, and the City Hospital, by an emergency beds bureau. "We are coping," a spokeswoman said. But Babula Sethia, clinical director of special services said that there are still those who cannot get access to care.

Nottingham City Hospital and Queen's Medical Centre which together provide intensive care for children in the city said they have turned 11 away since the start of November.

In Belfast, the Royal Hospital for Sick Children said it is dealing with emergencies only. "We have eight ICU beds and operate at almost 100 per cent capacity," a spokeswoman said. In Scotland, Glasgow Children's Hospital at Yorkhill, described the situation as "extremely busy" but said no children had yet been turned away. At Edinburgh Sick Children's NHS Trust, a spokeswoman said that no children were refused care but "that is not to say we have enough beds".

Do you ever feel that you can't keep up with the news? That, with the best will in the world, the intricacies of NHS reforms, the timetable of the Bosnian peace process and the problems of Terry Venables escape you? In short, have you lost the plot?

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**Wednesday:** The state of the world

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Survivors: Caroline Harrison and Steve Nicholson

## Love kept couple afloat after ferry sank

A British couple last night described how their love for each other kept them going as they swam in shark-infested waters for 20 hours, after their ferry sank off the Indonesian coast.

Steve Nicholson asked 24-year-old Caroline Harrison to marry him when her spirits began to fail after 10 hours surrounded by bodies in the sea.

The couple promised each other they would survive as they clung to each other for another 10 hours before they were rescued.

Mr Nicholson, 34, said: "I told her we should get married if we got to land and she said 'Yes'." He added: "I don't think we would have survived if we had not had each other. Caroline kept me going and I kept her going."

They were among only 47 people to be found alive after the cement-carrying ferry sank off Banda Aceh with 210

people on board on Friday night. Rescuers recovered 50 bodies, including one identified only as a 32-year-old Irish woman, named Margaret, by the time the search was called off last night.

The Britons, who are both from Eltham, south London, were treated in hospital for the effects of swallowing sea water. They were later taken to a hotel in Banda Aceh and the Foreign Office said they were still

in a state of shock following their ordeal. The couple had been together for four years, the last two of which they had spent backpacking around Australia and Asia. Mr Nicholson told ITN that they planned to return to Britain as soon as possible.

Talking about his marriage proposal, he said: "It was not a classic, romantic proposal. I turned to her and said, 'When we get home, we'll get married,

eh?" and she turned round and said 'okay'."

Mr Nicholson said the ferry had gone down in less than 30 seconds after it hit rocks. He said he tried to get life jackets, "but everybody was fighting each other for them and the next thing I knew was that the boat was already sinking".

The wreckage of the ferry was also found last night, renewing hope that some people may still be alive inside.

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## news

# Huge rises in BSkyB prices anger pub trade

IAN MACKINNON

Huge increases in subscription charges for BSkyB television have prompted publicans to complain to the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) over the satellite station's pricing policies. Many pubs in three of the leading brewery chains have decided to stop screening BSkyB, particularly popular for its sports coverage, when faced with as much as a quadrupling of prices.

The future is bound to intensify the storm surrounding BSkyB as the deadline for submissions to the OFT's inquiry into the broadcaster's near-

monopoly of film and sport for pay-television passes this Friday.

Small cable operators which buy BSkyB at wholesale prices complained that its control of conditional access technology for scrambling and unscrambling the signals was an abuse of its position in the market.

Yesterday, the former Secretary of State for National Heritage, David Mellor, joined the fray adding his weight to moves to amend the Broadcasting Bill to prevent BSkyB buying up eight major sporting events which would disappear from terrestrial television.

He hailed the eight events - the Olympics, soccer's World



Eat, drink and watch: Customers watching Sky Sport at the expense of the landlord, who pays the subscription for public viewing based on rateable value

Photograph: David Sandison

Cup, cricket test matches, Wimbledon, the Grand National, The Derby, the FA Cup final and the Scottish FA Cup final - as the "crown jewels of sport". But David Elstein, head of programming at BSkyB, heaped

scorn on the cross-party moves and said the only people to suffer from a clampdown would be the sports governing bodies which would lose out financially. Now as well as fears over BSkyB dominance of major

sporting events, there is anger over subscription charges. Major sporting events shown exclusively on BSkyB, such as Frank Bruno's world boxing championship bout, can be a big draw: 10 million viewers were

said to have watched, an estimated 6.5m in the pub. But angry landlords faced with hefty bills - as much as £120 a month for a large pub - and threats of being cut off complained bitterly. In a letter to the OFT, the

Brewers and Licensed Retailers' Association accused BSkyB of acting in an "arrogant and high-handed" manner in introducing a "new and totally unreasonable tariff for the public viewing of their satellite TV programmes in pubs".

OFT officials are still examining the complaint to decide if the matter should be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Brewers Bass and Whitbread are reviewing their position, but Scottish & Newcastle, Greene King and Greenalls, have already dropped BSkyB from some of their pubs.

Of Scottish & Newcastle's 1,950 managed pubs, 102 no longer have BSkyB. Chris Ripper, the personnel and trading director, said: "We did not welcome the sudden, steep increase in rates in our pubs, which in some cases was 314 per cent."

"Screenings of sports on Sky do not generate significant incremental profit for our pubs, although they are enjoyed and expected by customers in some houses."

At the Bellevue Hotel, Leamington-on-the-Soleat, Hampshire, where the cost for showing BSkyB in the bar rose from £12 a month in 1994 to £130, the owner could not afford to pull the plug because of the business he would lose.

But Peter Driscoll, the deputy manager, said that the increased business from events did not meet the higher charges. "We would suffer a loss of trade if we took it out," he said. "... the thing that's really annoying is that no one there would listen to reason or argument. You pay or they threaten to cut you off. It's really worrying when they are after more monopoly sporting events."

BSkyB maintained that its new pricing structure linked to rateable values introduced last September represented a fairer system and reflected the increasing coverage of international sporting events. A spokesman said about 30,000 pubs and clubs already took the service, with 10,000 new subscribers each year, and few were dropping the coverage.

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## Tory tables Bill to curb 'explicit' teen magazines

COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

Age restrictions could be imposed on teenage magazines under Tory plans to curb the amount of explicit sex advice on offer to children.

The sex advice to under-age teenagers in some of the magazines has shocked Conservative MPs and some major supermarket chains, including Sainsbury's and Asda, as well as WH Smith, the retail newsagent, have refused to stock one particular title, after complaints by parents.

A Bill to enforce new curbs on teenage magazines is to be introduced by Peter Luff, the Tory MP for Worcester, who said he was shocked to discover what his own children were reading.

"I was very surprised by the content of these magazines. It is quite explicit sex advice. Should we be allowing children to have magazines with advice on masturbation and oral sex?"

Mr Luff is preparing a Bill to introduce certification controls, like those on cinema films, establishing a recommended age limit for children to read certain magazines.

It would also establish an independent panel to decide on the certificates for magazines, and to hear complaints. Magazines would carry advice to parents, saying "not suitable" for children under certain ages.

As a backbencher, his Bill will have little chance of success without government help. But he is using the measure to try to force the hand of the Home Secretary, Michael Howard.

The Home Office has refused to give him any commitment to introduce legislation, but ministers are known to be concerned about the magazines. Mr Luff believes his Bill will be the catalyst for a campaign which will lead to some form of restraint on the teenage magazines.



Magazines like these have shocked the MP Peter Luff

When he presents his Bill to the Commons, he plans to quote articles from the *Independent* in November, which have highlighted the controversy surrounding articles in such magazines as *Sugar*, *Mix*, *TV Hits* and *Just Seventeen*. An issue of *Sugar*, aimed at 13- to 18-year-old girls, includes "first time sex - how to get it right", with a problem page request for advice on mutual masturbation.

One 14-year-old, quoted in the *Independent* in November, said: "In this month's *Sugar* it's got someone writing in, asking 'what's wanking yourself?' - It's easier to look at it on a problem page because it's private. In class, if you wanted to know the answer to something you would have to put your hand up and that's really embarrassing in front of your mates."

WH Smith, Sainsbury's, Asda and Tesco joined a list of retailers who withdrew *TV Hits* in November, after complaints by parents. But the publishers defended having given a 16-year-old girl advice on oral sex.

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# Fraud office director to step down

JOHN EISENHAMMER  
Financial Editor

George Staple is to step down as director of the Serious Fraud Office when his contract runs out next year, in an attempt to defuse the explosion of criticism prompted by the outcome of the Maxwell case.

The announcement came as the future of the SFO was yet again thrown into doubt, as senior politicians from both sides of the House called for an urgent review of the way big-time fraud is fought in Britain.

The Maxwell case, which re-

sulted in Ian and Kevin Maxwell and Larry Trachtenberg, a former financial adviser to the Maxwell empire, being found not guilty of defrauding pension funds, has capped an increasingly unhappy period of tenure for Mr Staple, as rumblings of discontent have grown louder among senior SFO case directors. Mr Staple's five-year contract ends in April 1997.

He is resisting calls for his departure after the Maxwell case, which lasted four years and cost taxpayers £25m. "I don't think there is anything in this case which should make me consid-

er my position," he said. "Our record is a respectable one. I don't think we should be judged on the result of one case."

An SFO source said yesterday that it had always been Mr Staple's intention to step down next year.

Mr Staple came close to resigning last summer during the furor over new revelations which cast a poor light on him, and the SFO's handling of the prosecution of Roger Levitt. Facing multiple charges of defrauding investors of £34m, carrying a possible jail term of between seven and ten years, Levitt was even-

tually sentenced to 180 hours of community service.

The Government was embarrassed when it had to concede that earlier answers to Parliament on the affair had not been accurate, and Mr Staple had to apologise to the influential Treasury Select Committee for giving it incorrect evidence. His conduct was heavily censured by the committee and later last year its report on financial regulation criticised the SFO.

Conservatives on the committee have called loudly for a rethink on combating complex City fraud. Matthew Carrington,

a Tory member of the committee, said: "This latest embarrassment over Maxwell forcefully raises questions about whether fraud prosecution might not be better handled by those bodies responsible for regulating financial services."

Although it made no formal recommendation, the committee is known to have leaned towards an option which would see the chief regulator, the Securities and Investments Board, also given the power to take investigations through to prosecution.

But the lack of any prospect of any change in the law this side

of an election meant the option was not pushed.

Labour has committed a future government to a full review of the SFO's operations and is also considering giving the regulators power of prosecution. "It is now time urgently to examine the way in which we prosecute complicated City crimes and the role of the SFO," Alastair Darling, Labour's City spokesman, said.

The loss of the Maxwell case has exacerbated disenchantment among the SFO's upper ranks. Senior officers believe Mr Staple's defence of the SFO has

been inadequate, exposing his inexperience in criminal legal matters. There is little support internally for him to carry on.

Mr Staple, and the SFO, received decisive backing from Sir Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney-General, however. "If it did not exist, I am sure we would have to invent it," he said of the SFO after the Maxwell verdict.

After a Cabinet review last year, the Government concluded there was no better alternative to the SFO and said it should be reinforced as the centre of expertise for all big fraud cases.

## Train doors in 'urgent' safety review

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR

Hundreds of InterCity trains may have to be modified to stop passengers hurting themselves by jumping out of door windows only a year after £17m was spent on making train doors safer.

Great Western Trains, soon to be privatised, is examining the possibility of sealing up door windows, following the enquiry into the Maidenhead train fire in which one man died. Other InterCity operators are expected to follow suit. Ian Jones was killed by a train in September when he jumped out of the window of an InterCity train after a fire broke out.

Last week's inquiry report by the Health and Safety Executive criticised emergency procedures for evacuating passengers from trains and recommended a review of emergency equipment and facilities.

All 1,900 coaches in InterCity's fleet have just been fitted with central-locking devices which prevent passengers from opening the doors until the guard has activated the mechanism. The modification may have saved many lives in the Maidenhead incident because it prevented panicking passengers from jumping into the path of the train that killed Mr Jones. However, safety experts are now having to consider whether it may be better to lock the door windows and refit internal handles which, of course, could only be operated once the guard had activated the central door mechanism. A safety consultant working for the railways said: "It is amazing this was not done in the first place. It is a typical half-cock BR scheme."

A series of other incidents has prompted Great Western, which operated the train involved in the Maidenhead fire, to look "urgently" at the safety of its doors. The worst incident occurred last summer when a woman, Jennifer Dean, was saying goodbye to her boyfriend who was leaning out of the door window. She was dragged under the train and was seriously injured, losing a leg.

Children's favourites: Historic characters up for auction as technology develops multi-million pound profits

## Sooty sweeps the board in race for rights

JOJO MOYES

Some of Britain's favourite platinum-selling acts are due to change hands within days, in deals worth millions of pounds in royalties and video sales.

It is not Blur or Oasis swapping labels, but it would be fair to say they are popular with the young. Sales of Sooty's last two videos reached 1.3 million. Noddy has his own "fanzine" and Winnie the Pooh is a world-film star.

Sooty, the petulant glove puppet, is said to be "as certain as possible" to be bought out by Sooty International, his management company, in a deal rumoured to be worth £4m.

This would mean the end of his association with the Corbett family, with whom he has worked hand-in-glove since 1952.

Publishers Reed Elsevier confirmed yesterday that bidding was in process for the many of the rights to Thomas the Tank Engine, Winnie the Pooh and Babar the Elephant, as part of the sale of its consumer books arm.

"There's an auction in place. There are a number of serious players and they are enthusiastic about the business," said a spokesman yesterday.

One of those bidders is rumoured to be Carlton Communications, who were said to be negotiating a multi-million-

pound deal to buy the copyright to the Bear of Very Little Brain.

Meanwhile, the copyright to Noddy, for whom the merchandising alone is worth £42m, is said to be "within weeks" of changing hands.

Salar Farzad of the corporate finance arm of Price Waterhouse, which is handling the sale of all Enid Blyton's copyrights, said it was fine-tuning a deal with a "preferred purchaser".

Despite the advent of computer games, these characters—the youngest of whom is at least middle-aged—are extremely lucrative thanks to video, computer technology and merchandising.

"What's key about this industry at the moment is that technology is changing at such a rapid rate that there's all sorts of outlets," Mr Farzad said. "These are all brand names; the parents knew them and they're still popular with the children."

Sales of Enid Blyton books number more than 8 million copies a year, with translations into 27 languages. Noddy alone has sold over 100 million books since his birth in 1949.

Partly because of Noddy's huge popularity, BBC Children's Video has become the second largest video label after Walt Disney. On the back of the television series, there are 300 "licensed products".

Competition is also thought to be especially fierce for



Child's play: Sooty videos have grossed £10m and the puppet may soon be sold for £4m

Photographs: Edward Sykes

Thomas, who has grown into a £2bn worldwide business since his creation by the Rev Wilbert Awdry 50 years ago.

Winnie the Pooh, meanwhile, achieved celluloid fame after

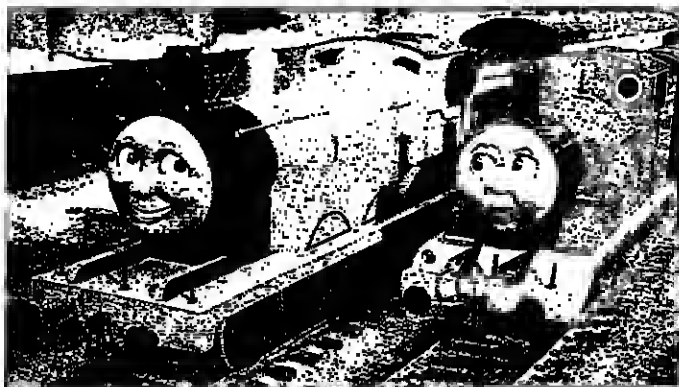
Disney bought the rights to transfer the books to film and to market products based on the screen characters in the 1960s.

Sooty's likely buyer, Sooty International, has helped create a multi-million pound industry around him. Videos such as Learn to Read With Sooty and Learn Simple Arithmetic With Sooty have hit 1.3 million, grossing £10m.

The sale has come about because Sooty's partner, 48-year-old Matthew Corbett, is said to be keen to retire. His late father, Harry, would no doubt be gratified at the comfortable retirement that Sooty's efforts promise for his son. He bought the puppet more than 40 years ago to amuse Matthew - for the equivalent of 37 and a half pence.



Time for change: A Winnie the Pooh book (left) and Thomas the Tank Engine



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## Duchess's 'Budgie' in clear

LOUISE JURY

Buckingham Palace yesterday dismissed suggestions that it would be studying details of the Duchess of York's latest multi-million-pound business deal, for fear she was exploiting her links with the Royal Family.

A spokesman said the Duchess was well aware of its position on the unauthorised commercial marketing of the Royal name and reputation, and added that her business ventures were her own affair.

The Duchess is due back in Britain from America this week after clinching the deal, which is thought to involve the worldwide publishing rights to her cartoon creation, *Budgie the Helicopter*. It should help clear her debts, said to exceed £1m, and enable creditors to be paid.

According to reports, the American behind the venture is Ray Chambers, 53, a multi-millionaire entrepreneur.

Despite the Palace's lack of interest in the fine print, children's cartoon creator Geoffrey Hanson said he was keeping a close eye on her plans.

He wrote to the Duchess last year, pointing out that her idea for a cartoon series with talking fruit and vegetables appeared to be based on his own creation, *The Buddies*. The Duchess's scheme was reportedly dropped, but Mr Hanson said he had never received any official assurances.

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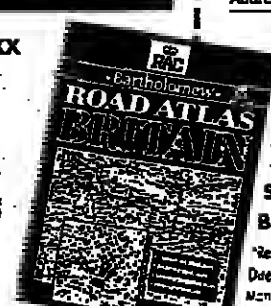
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# Shortage of students worries legal profession

STEPHEN WARD  
Legal Affairs Correspondent

Fewer graduates than ever are applying to be solicitors because of declining salaries and career prospects, the latest figures from the Law Society show.

Applications for the one-year compulsory postgraduate courses starting this September closed last month, and Law Society figures show that the numbers applying are down by a quarter in three years, and 15 per cent since last year. For the first time in living memory, the profession is facing a shortage of demand. Many of the one-year postgraduate courses are running with empty places this year, and from September there will be even bigger shortfalls.

Applications for places have traditionally outstripped supply. But a virtual drying up of grants to fund the one-year postgraduate courses, coupled with a declining chance of earning enough in future to repay overdrafts, is blamed for the change. Fees are £5,000 for the year, and students - many already burdened with debts from their degree course - have to find another year's living expenses, too.

Applicants for next year's courses have dropped from 8,959 to 7,595. If the same proportion as usual drop out before starting, and the same percentage fail their exams at the end, there will only be a few more successful graduates than training places, currently about 4,000 a year.

Because most graduates are not completely flexible about where they will work, or what type of work they want, the profession believes it needs a 10 per cent surplus to fill all training places.

The calibre of candidate has apparently fallen already - whereas only one in fourteen used to fail the exams, now one in five do so.

Only five years ago the profession was gearing up for expansion, licensing many of the

new universities to provide legal practice courses in addition to the traditional sole provider, the College of Law. But the optimism of the late Eighties was tempered by the realities of the recession, particularly in house sales, which hit conveyancing income hard.

Under the profession's rules, a student cannot qualify as a solicitor until they have spent two years in an "apprenticeship" with a firm, on what is known as a training contract. Initially, when the expanded courses began to come through in 1993, there was a huge surplus of post-graduates with no training contracts to go to. Their experience has deterred their successors.

Paradoxically, the news comes at a time when the profession is trying to find a way to impose artificial limits on the numbers coming in. Martin Meers, president of the Law Society, has suggested imposing tests to weed out some applicants for the courses.

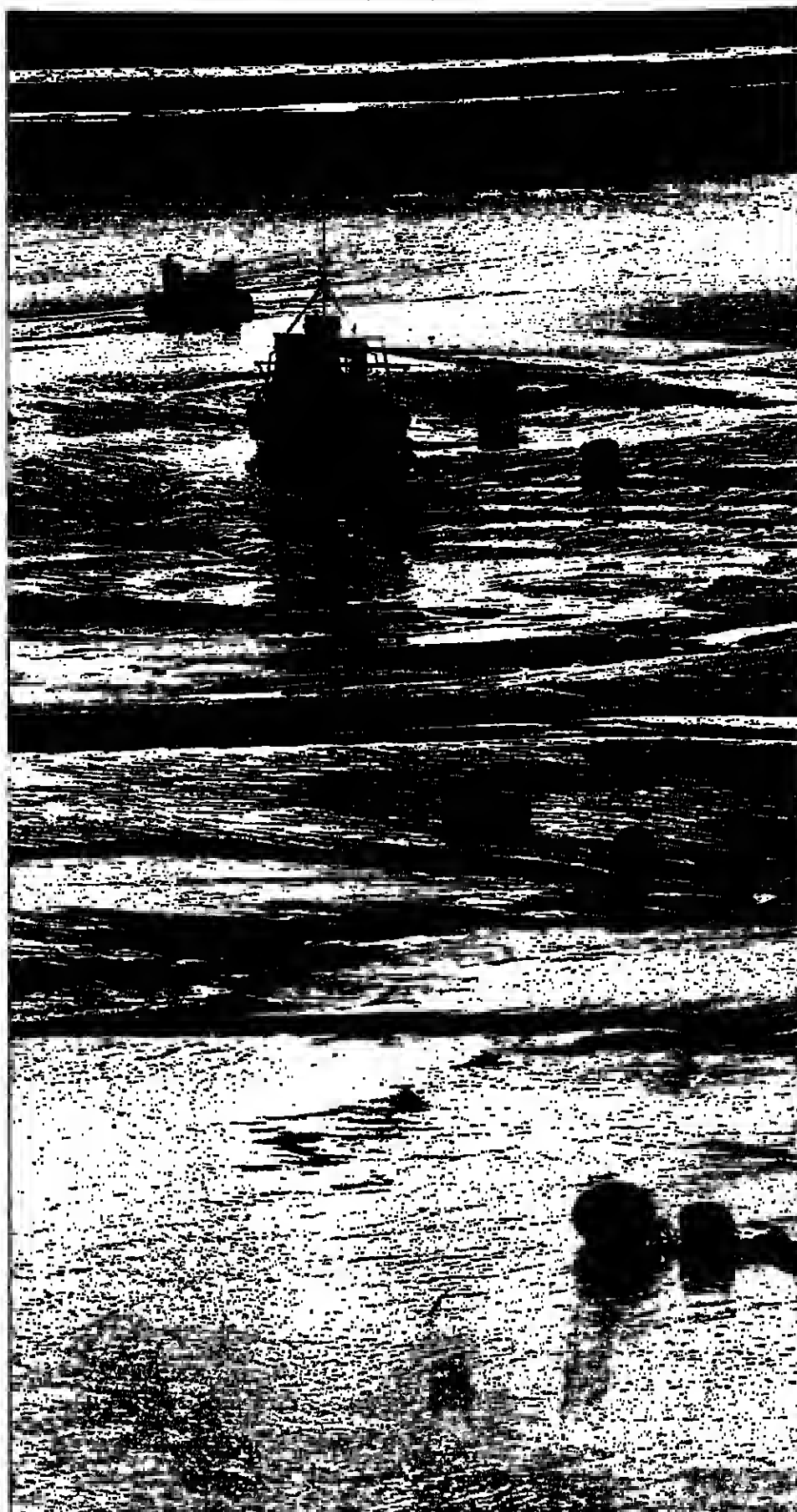
However, John Randall, the Law Society's director in charge of training, warned that there was a risk of a shortage of high-street practitioners. He said that local firms, which had already been squeezed by the recession, faced an uncertain future because of legal aid and divorce reforms, and few could afford to take on trainees.

He said it was "extremely regrettable" for the profession that only the children of richer parents could now afford to become solicitors.

Richard Holbrook, head of the College of Law - which provides more postgraduate courses than all the others put together - said that 30 years ago it was mostly the children of the wealthy who were able to become solicitors. By 1970 it had become more egalitarian, but now it was going back again.

"If you have been paying school fees for years, you won't mind paying £5,000," he said. "Market forces are taking their effect."

## Birds at risk: New reserve offers little sanctuary to wildlife driven out by Cardiff Bay barrage



Swallowed up: Cardiff Bay mudflats provide an irreplaceable feeding site for wading birds, which will not be reproduced in the planned reserve. Photograph: Bob Stratton

# Fears for waders on doomed mudflats

NICHOLAS SCHOON

The Government has promised to create an "internationally important" new bird reserve beside the Severn Estuary, to compensate for one it is completely destroying in the construction of the Cardiff Bay barrage.

But conservation groups say the new reserve, near Newport, covering one-and-a-half square miles, will provide a feeding ground for only a fraction of the wading birds who feed on the mudflats of Cardiff Bay. These will be submerged for ever once the barrage is completed next year.

It seems likely the Government will end up owning half, or less, of the new reserve's land. The rest will stay in the hands of farmers paid to manage it in a way that favours wildlife. Critics say that provides no guarantee it will remain a reserve.

The designated land, at Uskmouth and Goldcliff, on the Gwent Levels, consists of grazing meadows and the grounds of a redundant power station, where huge quantities of fuel ash have been dumped into lagoons. A variety of rare plants and insects lives in the drainage ditches that criss-cross the fields, and the land is already a Government-designated Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The plan is to turn the power station grounds into reed beds and create saline lagoons, where the salty tidal waters of the estuary mix with fresh water. Announcing the £5.7m scheme last week, the Welsh Secretary William Hague said it was a "unique and exciting opportunity".

It is the third area mooted for a reserve to compensate for the loss of Cardiff Bay. Two earlier ones fell by the wayside, as

the Government feared it would have to seek compulsory purchase powers to acquire the land, and then be ruled out of order at a public inquiry. At this site it has reached agreement already with the power station's owner, National Power.

Peter Ferns, chairman of a coalition of local and national wildlife groups opposed to the construction of the barrage, fears only a few dozen redshank and dunlin would be attracted to the new reserve in winter, as it lacks high mudflats. More than 4,000 of these waders, a significant proportion of their UK population, winter in Cardiff Bay but will soon have to move.

"Maybe the new reserve will provide a home for substantial numbers of other species, but we can't be sure," he said. "You can't make up for the destruction of important habitat like the Cardiff Bay mudflats."

## Army land provides safe haven for stone curlew

NICHOLAS SCHOON

The stone curlew is a strange bird. It is a long-legged wader which cannot stand the wet and hunts insects and earthworms at night with its large yellow eyes.

It is also one of Britain's most endangered species; its breeding population has fallen by 85 per cent in the past 50 years and only 166 pairs are known to have bred here last year. The global population runs into tens of thousands but the bird is in decline across Europe, and we have adopted it as our emblem, to represent all the threatened wildlife covered in this series.

A distant relative of the more common curlew, the stone curlew arrives here in April from its winter homes in north Africa and Spain. Almost all the British birds are found on or around Ministry of Defence training grounds on Salisbury Plain, or on the Breckland, a big sandy area of heath which straddles the Norfolk Suffolk border.



Heritage of the wild

Ground nesting in open country makes the parents, eggs and chicks highly vulnerable to foxes but the jackdaw-sized bird has an effective streaky brown camouflage and a habit of keeping very still.

Changes in farming are thought to be the main causes of the species' decline. Most of the pastures where it once fed and nested have been converted to arable fields. Most stone curlews now nest between rows of spring-sown crops such as sugar beet and barley, and face extreme danger from tractors. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and English Nature have stone-curlew watchers who place warning markers near dozens of nest sites. Farmers are compensated for keeping away.

The stone curlew is one of



Losing ground: The stone curlew thrives on bare land

116 endangered or declining species for which rescue plans have been proposed by a steering group of Government scientists, academics, and wildlife organisations. The aim, at a cost of £105,000 a year, is to double the number of breeding pairs in Britain by 2010. This can be done by giving farmers better incentives to manage land in a way which favours the stone curlew and by asking the army to do the same on its training grounds.

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# Press born again the night Fleet Street died

BARRIE CLEMENT  
Labour Editor

Ten years ago this week, Rupert Murdoch took Britain's national newspaper industry by the throat, shook it and deposited it at Wapping just east of London's Tower Bridge.

In one weekend, Mr Murdoch put the all-powerful print unions to the sword and - much to their incredulity - produced and distributed his four titles without their assistance.

Along with the historic defeat of the miners in the coal strike which ended a year earlier, it was a defining moment in Thatcherism. Rarely has an industry been transformed with such speed and audacity.

On the night of 24 January, the most productive presses in Fleet Street fell silent for the last time. Twenty four hours later and three miles to the east "Fortress Wapping", surrounded by razor wire and patrolled by security guards, printed the *News of the World* and the *Sunday Times*. A day later the *Times* and the *Sun* followed.

National newspapers were never the same again. Mr Murdoch's coup enabled the rest of Fleet Street to dispense with their antique production methods, even some looked down their noses at his methods. In addition, new titles such as the *Independent* would arguably never have been launched.

Without the intervention of the "chapel fathers" of the *Sage* and *NGA* print unions, journalists and advertising staff were able to cast aside their typewriters. Keying straight into computer screens they could set their copy in print.

Only Eddy Shah and his *Today* newspaper had been able to bring new technology to national newspapers. But Mr Shah was a minnow to Mr Murdoch's shark.

The weekend fift to Wapping provoked a year-long conflict which became a *cause célèbre* among union activists and led to violent picket line clashes.



Flash point: News International's move to Wapping led to violent clashes between police and pickets

Print union leaders and the chapel fathers had been outwitted. The 5,000 print workers had voted to strike in protest at the conditions demanded by management negotiators to run the Wapping plant - and they were dismissed. A day before the Fleet Street presses stopped, Mr Murdoch twisted the knife by insisting that the deal - including total flexibility, a no-strike clause and powers to hire and fire at will - would have to apply to the old sites be had no intention of maintaining. A union offer to give him most of what he wanted came too late.

Before 1985 Fleet Street had been a byword for restrictive practices. There was overmanning and the élite of the printers were on wages equivalent to £100,000 a year today. But proprietors acceded to union demands because the high costs kept out competitors.

The Wapping complex had been built some 10 years before Mr Murdoch's patience snapped. Unions wanted their old conditions preserved if they moved east, causing a decade of desultory negotiations. However, a year or so before the dispute, Mr Murdoch began recruiting for Wapping under the guise of the *London Post* - a newspaper he had no intention of publishing.

The subterfuge took on the atmosphere of international espionage. Hand-picked execu-

tives and journalists from helped to ready the plant for the move and the rebel Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunication and Plumbing Union helped recruit the shadow workforce.

The whole process illustrated Mr Murdoch's managerial genius. From the point of view

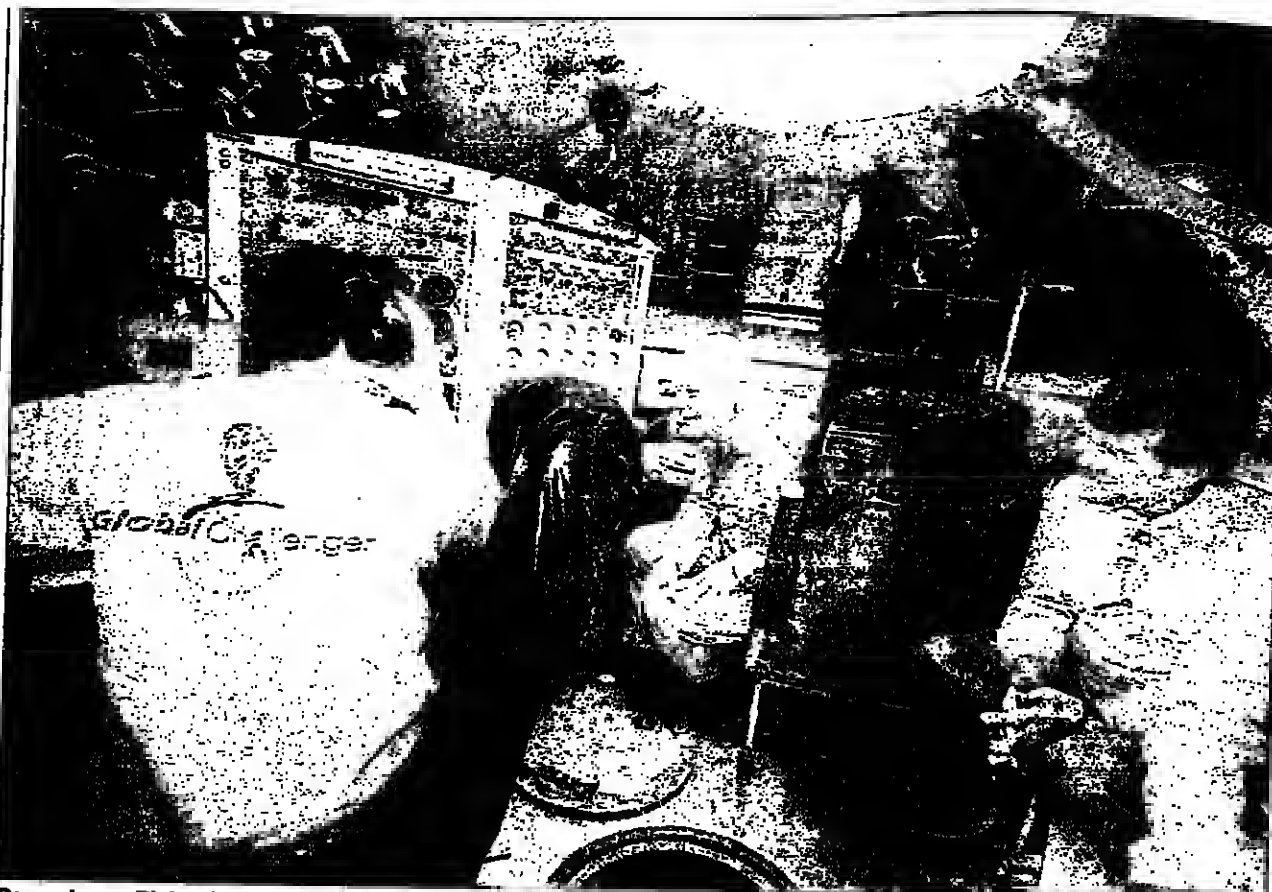
of his sacked employees however it was an evil genius. Wapping had a human cost.

Union representatives talk of broken marriages, nervous breakdowns and suicides which they believe can be directly attributed to the dispute. And they accuse the police of exceeding their brief as peace-keepers in enforcing Tory labour laws designed to crush the unions.

The unions say that the pay and conditions of most involved in national newspapers have since been driven down.

There is a fascinating postscript to the story. Under present Labour Party plans, employers would have to recognise and negotiate with unions in any workplace where a majority of employees want it.

The new GPMU print union already has members inside Wapping. Could Mr Murdoch be forced once more to negotiate with his old enemies?



Power base: Richard Branson's team in Marrakesh preparing the capsule of his hot-air balloon for its round-the-world attempt, which has been delayed by bad weather. Rory McCarthy, centre, is one of the pilots. Photograph: John Voos

## 'Watchdog' uncovers a lethal trade in knives

Traders are selling lethal combat knives to teenagers without asking any questions despite growing public concern over a spate of stabbings, according to a television investigation.

The nationwide police amnesty on knives - the results of which will be released tomorrow - has had little impact on unrestricted trade in the weapons, according to evidence gathered by the BBC1 programme *Watchdog*, to be broadcast tonight.

*Watchdog* sent 16-year-old Steven Hale to Liverpool city

centre where he bought combat knives with serrated blades almost seven inches long. Although it was not illegal for the shops to sell him the knives, none of the shopkeepers questioned Steven's age or motives.

Detective Inspector John Colligan from Wallasey, Merseyside said: "If [traders] could see the horrendous injuries caused in knife attacks they would consider restrictions as to who they sell knives to."

Home Office figures attribute one third of all killings last year to knife attacks.

## DAILY POEM

### I Leave This At Your Ear for Nessie Dunsmuir

By W. S. Graham

*I leave this at your ear for when you wake,  
A creature in its abstract cage asleep.  
Your dreams blindfold you by the light they make.*

*The owl called from the naked-woman tree  
As I came down by the Kyle farm to hear  
Your house silent by the speaking sea.*

*I have come late but I have come before  
Later with slaked steps from stone to stone  
To hope to find you listening for the door.*

*I stand in the ticking room. My dear, I take  
A moth kiss from your breath. The shore gulls cry.  
I leave this at your ear for when you wake.*

William Sydney Graham, who died 10 years ago this month, was an important figure in 20th-century poetry. He was an absolute master of his craft - in many ways a "poet's poet" - but never properly reached the audience he deserved and his contribution to British poetry has escaped public notice. He lived for most of his adult life in Cornwall, but had been born in Greenock on the Clyde and as a young man worked as an engineer. A first collection *Cage without Grievance* was published in 1942 and six more followed. T.S. Eliot wrote of his fifth *The Nightfishing*, "some of these poems - by their sustained power, their emotional depth and maturity and their superb technical skill - may well be among the more important poetic achievements of our time". His *Selected Poems* are published this week by Faber at £9.99.

To mark the 10th anniversary of his death, Radio 4's *Kaleidoscope* will present a special profile on Tuesday 30 January. There will also be a memorial event at the Tate Gallery, St Ives, on Tuesday 20 February.

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## international

## Peace sends village fleeing for safety

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY  
Majdan

Bosnia: British troops vainly urge Croats to stay in their homes on wrong side of the line

"Let us make a sign of peace." In a freezing church at Majdan, British officers shook hands with the Bosnian Croat HVO and local civilians, their breath like steam in the church's icy white interior. Fr Adolf Visaticki prepared for communion.

There could have been no fitter words. But even peace has its problems. Another round of "ethnic cleansing" has started, sanctioned by the Dayton peace agreement and encouraged by local authorities anxious to complete tidying up the map and partition Bosnia still more cleanly. It may not be the last Catholic Mass in Majdan, but most people of this Croat village, which is to be returned to Bosnian Serb rule, have left or were leaving yesterday.

At the end of the service the British commander of peace im-

plementation troops in the area, Brigadier Richard Dannatt, tried to persuade the people to stay, but it was too late.

During almost four years of war and Serb occupation, the hundred or so families in Majdan, between Mrkonje Grad and Jajce, lived unmolested.

Then, last summer, the Bosnian Croat HVO, backed by the regular Croatian army, drove the Serbs north. Serb troops around Jajce, fearing they might be cut off, fled, giving the Bosnian government army an easy ride north as well. But under the Dayton agreement the area including Majdan will be handed back to the Serbs. All HVO forces must withdraw by 3 February and yesterday it looked as if most people from Majdan would join them.

The reasons why Bosnian

Croat villagers who survived Serb rule are suddenly anxious to leave can be seen in the villages all around. Along the road to Majdan, you pass Serb villages that have been completely burned and wrecked by the Croats, including an Orthodox church with its distinctive onion dome. The villagers of Majdan, who yesterday flew a flag saying "This is Croatia", for I-For's benefit, did nothing to stop it. When the Serbs return, they are likely to be angry.

In any other circumstances, Majdan could be from a fairy tale. The houses look prosperous, steep-roofed barns overflow with chickens. "Before the war we could live with the Serbs but now we can't," said Franjo Kovcaljic, 52, who was preparing to move with his wife, Slavija, 40, their three

children, a good-natured dog and a black-and-white kitten. They were loading possessions on to a truck, which looked as if it belonged to the HVO.

Franjo had been a refugee before, from Mrkonje Grad. He had moved into this, his brother's house, and now they were moving everything to Glamoc, a town which has been assigned to the Croat/Muslim zone, where they had somewhere to go. "We'll take the cat and dog too," he said. "We wouldn't like them to suffer here."

In Glamoc, the houses formerly owned by Serbs are lying empty. "I've got a Serb friend down the road," said Franjo. "I'll move into his house and he'll move into mine. He doesn't want to either but it's the change of boundaries - the governments."

Slavija began to cry. "I went to Glamoc yesterday to see our new house. It had no doors, no windows, nothing..."

But at least the Kovcaljics have somewhere to go. The Serb mayors of Mrkonje Grad and Sipovo visited their old towns on Saturday, and news of the visit had got back to Majdan. The Serbs had tried to reassure the Croats but the Croats started haranguing them, which made the Serb officials less reassuring.

The use of HVO huries and comments from many people suggest the local Croat authorities are trying to get people to leave. The only person, apart from Fr Visaticki, who wanted to stay, was Franjo Deljic, 47, a blacksmith who lives with his 75-year-old mother and some nieces and nephews. "Where

else would I go?" he said.

But then his mother interrupted him. "He'll go," she said. "We're not staying. Not on your life. Don't listen to him."

Fr Visaticki said he would stay until he was forced to leave, and his sermon paved the way for Brig Dannatt's address after the service. He used the example of the apostles Peter and Paul. "Don't listen to your mother-in-law," he said. "Peter and Paul dropped everything to follow a teaching they trusted."

Brig Dannatt held up the Dayton agreement. That was what they had to trust, he said. "The fact is that the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina is over. It is also a fact that the country was divided into two administrative portions or entities. As it happens, your village is in the part which will be administered by

the Serbs."

He stressed that they should stay where they were. "Don't let others think of you as people who are going to collaborate or ... become unduly wrapped up in the Serb state," he said.

"I have placed my soldiers in this village to give some protection but my soldiers are only here in support of the Dayton agreement, which contains your rights. The choice is yours."

"I have in my possession just two books at the moment," Brig Dannatt added. "Put your faith in God - His word is written down in the Bible, and put your faith in the Dayton peace agreement, because that has your human rights and your future wrapped up in it. I hope very much you will be here in church this time next week."

Franjo Kovcaljic reckoned everyone would leave by 3 February. Others estimated that of 100 families, 10 might stay.

## Lebanese held over Lübeck deaths

IMRE KARACS  
Bonn

Germany breathed a collective sigh of relief yesterday as it became apparent that the blaze which killed 10 immigrants last Thursday in Lübeck could not have been the work of neo-Nazis.

Forensic scientists in the Baltic city established that the fire was deliberately set by someone inside the house.

As the front door was locked, only a resident could have caused the inferno. Last night police were holding a 21-year-old Lebanese man living in the house, who was said by firefighters to have boasted that "we were the ones".

"The suspect had detailed knowledge that only the perpetrator or someone involved in the deed could have known," said Klaus-Dieter Schultz, Lübeck's public prosecutor. "There were no technical devices in the area immediately surrounding the place where the fire broke out, so a technical cause was ruled out," Mr Schultz added.

Although no clear motive has been found, the man was charged with 10 counts of murder and 38 counts of attempted murder. His lawyer says the case was misjudged, while neighbours point out that the suspect fought shoulder to shoulder with firefighters to rescue people from the flames.

Under pressure to find a logical explanation, the authorities still seem to be clutching at straws. Their latest theory is that there may have been conflict among the different nationalities occupying the cramped space of the house, though they concede that police had never been aware of any dispute. The house was inhabited by Zaireans, Togolese, Lebanese, Syrians and ethnic German immigrants from Poland.

At least the neo-Nazis are for the moment off the hook, along with the stigmatised population of eastern Germany, who came under suspicion in the aftermath of the blaze. Four east Germans were held for a day without any evidence, thousands demonstrated in Lübeck and Hamburg against the extreme right, and politicians rushed to condemn the latest outbreak of racial violence.

The ultimate cause may yet turn out to be a discarded cigarette, but there is still a lesson to be learnt from Lübeck: that prejudice, in this case prejudice against the impoverished east, continues to permeate German society.

## New Greek PM picks his team

Athens (Reuters) — Greece's new Prime Minister yesterday unveiled his new cabinet, making Theodoros Pangalos, a controversial figure, his Foreign Minister.

Costas Simitis kept the Economy Minister, Yannis Papanastasiou, and the Finance Minister, Alexandros Pappadopoulos, but brought in several prominent party reformers, a spokesman announced.

The most controversial appointment was the new Foreign Minister. Theodoros Pangalos publicly insulted Germany and Italy when Greece last held the European Union presidency. In 1993 he likened Germany to "a giant with a brain" and left the government of the former prime minister, Andreas Papandreu, and joined Mr Simitis's group of party reformers.

Though Mr Pangalos's confrontational style set teeth on edge while Greece held the EU presidency, he is described as more committed to European-style social democracy than Mr Papandreu.

Mr Simitis, 59, was chosen as Prime Minister last week by the Socialist group in parliament, replacing Mr Papandreu who has been in hospital since 20 November. Mr Simitis's new cabinet appeared to be a mix of Papandreu loyalists and members of his own reform camp.

Mr Simitis wants more money spent on development, more privatisation and greater compliance with EU standards.

He is expected to make big changes in the major ministries, state corporations and banks, but to keep some Papandreu traditionalists, to avoid divisions in the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) party.

He is expected to take a more pragmatic approach to Greece's fragile relations with its Balkan neighbours, Albania and the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia.

European gridlock: The Transport Commissioner wants new links, but protesters fear environmental disaster

## Kinnock steers EU off a road to nowhere

SARAH HELM  
Brussels

Driving back to Brussels at the New Year, Neil Kinnock got off Le Shuttle at Calais and sped up the E40 motorway. Along with every other truck and car using this prime European corridor, the EU Transport Commissioner was forced to turn off the motorway at Veurnes, and proceed along a 10km (6 mile) rat-run towards a bottleneck in the village of Adenkirke, on the Franco-Belgian border. In a line of vehicles thundering up to Rotterdam, he slowed down to pass the border, where the French still do spot checks.

The creator of Europe's "citizens' network" must have despaired as he observed the glass rattle in the window of the corner boulangerie. All along this choked track, fumes foul the sea breeze, scattering pintail ducks across the ancient dunes. Just a short drive from Brussels, Mr Kinnock was snarled in European gridlock.

Tomorrow he unveils his European "citizens' network" scheme as part of a transport plan which was first outlined in the Maastricht treaty. The scheme envisages some 15,000km of roads, which will complete a 58,000km network. There are plans for 70,000km of railway track, including 22,000 km for high-speed trains. There will be transport corridors, new inland waterways and 267 airports "of common interest". The single market and the free movement of people demands integrated networks, said the treaty.

For now, however, the plan is just a dream. All over Europe, motorways often end at frontiers and railway lines and signalling systems do not match.

The story of the missing kilometres on the E40 artery illustrates the problem. The motorway is a priority project. One of the so-called "Tens", or trans-European networks, the

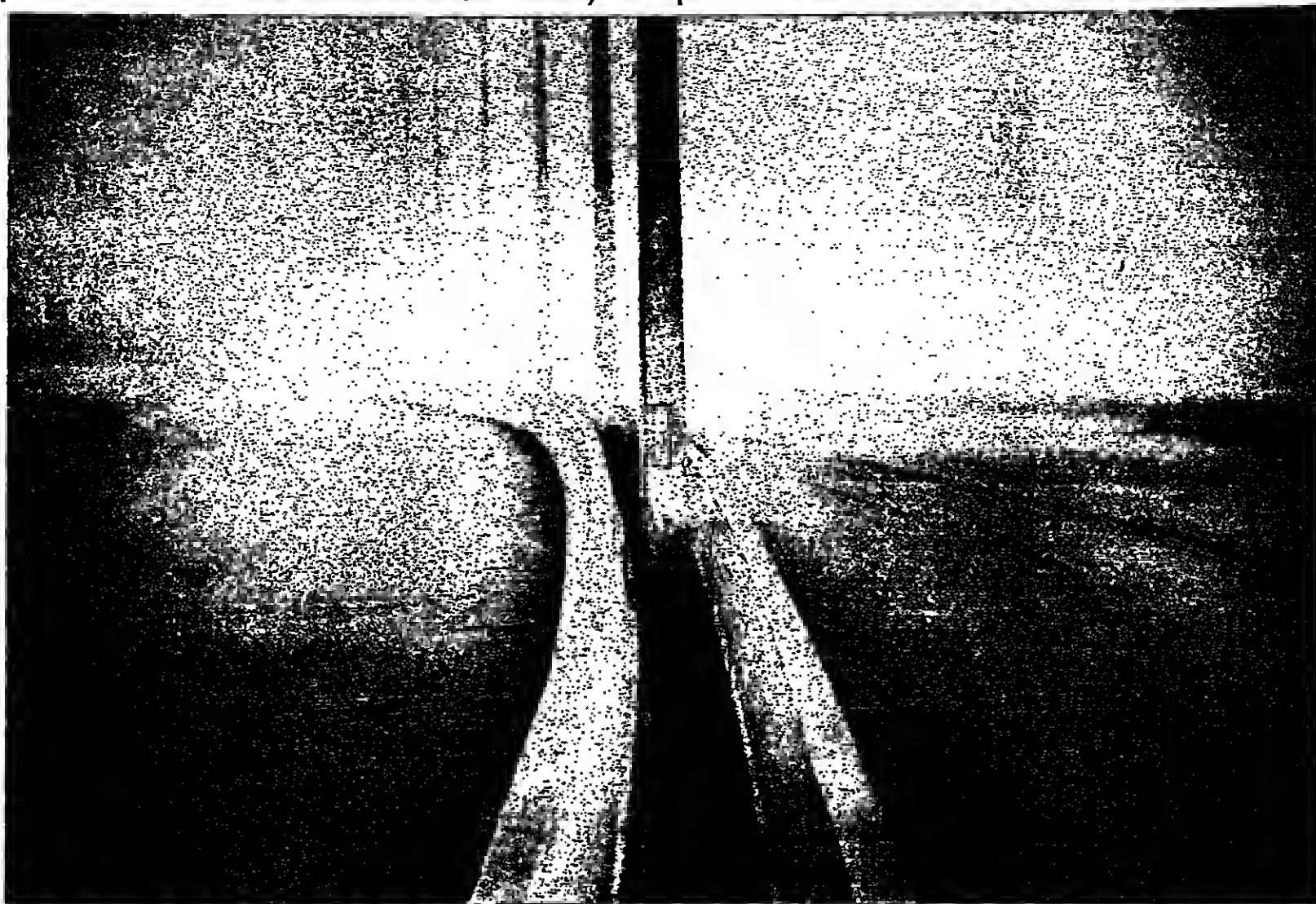
road is intended to link Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Brussels to Calais, the Channel tunnel and London. While much of the link is in place, the Belgians have been reluctant to spend the money to complete it, largely because, whatever the benefit for "Europe", there has been no perceived benefit for Belgium.

Already the country is questioning the value of its own national network of motorways. Partly as a result of chaotic decentralised planning, the country has a higher proportion of roads than anywhere in Europe, with four kilometres of road for every square kilometre of land. The federal system means each town and region competes to have its own major road links, with little thought for the general interest. Belgian environmentalists have been swift to learn the lessons, questioning the economic benefits of the myriad of major routes which carve up countryside, benefiting only the big cities.

The fear is that European network could have the same effect on a bigger scale. Belgium is lodged between the big powers of France and Germany, with Britain just across the water. This small state fears it would just become a transit area, criss-crossed by motorways and railways serving Europe's bigger powers.

"Belgium thinks it will become a distribution centre for Europe," says Gijfs Kuneman, director of the European Federation for Transport and the Environment.

Local interests also lobbied against the E40 link: the port of Zeebrugge feared that it would lose traffic to the French ports in the south. The missing link passes through the Flemish part of Belgium, causing further complications. The Flemish transport body feared that the link could benefit rival French-speaking Wallonia to the south. The Belgian nature lobby warned about the effect the



The 'missing link' of unfinished road (above), which forces traffic through the border village of Adenkirke (below)

Photographs: Dillon Bryden

road would have on a nearby seal colony and on the rare ducks which inhabit the dunes, untouched since the 14th century. A 17th-century Flemish farm, intended as a museum, was also threatened.

According to the Flemish transport ministry, the problems have now been overcome and the road will be completed next year. In the end there will be no choice but to build the link, because the Channel tunnel is a "fact on the ground" and the increased traffic flow has come about anyway, creating pollution and danger on the small Flemish country roads.

The building of Europe's transport network will see many more such battles. Lobbyists are preparing to block the building of a new stretch of road from Veurnes to Ypres, which would take trucks thundering past First World War cemeteries.

Europe's environmental lobby is also flexing its muscles. A powerful alliance of groups is monitoring Mr Kinnock's plans. Greenpeace says carbon dioxide emissions would increase by

18 per cent if all the Tens roads were built. Friends of the Earth says people should stay at home. Newbury-style protests have not yet begun on the Continent, but a European action day against road-building, planned for March, could signal the start.

Furthermore, the entire Tens project has run into the buffers of the European Parliament. Angry that it was not consulted on the routes, the Parliament has blocked agreement by calling for 284 amendments to the Commission plan.

Although the 14 priority projects are largely rail, there are too many roads in the wider network, say MEPs. Because national governments were invited to submit proposals for new links when the network was first devised, every local authority in Europe tried to promote its pet road, in the hope of getting European or private funds. The result, say critics, is that there is little "European" in the plan.

The Commission, meanwhile, is powerless to push its project forward. It has no pow-



er to intervene in local planning problems, and no money to pay for the multi-billion pound projects. Apart from a 1.8bn ecu (£1.5bn) Commission budget for feasibility studies, national

governments must fund the schemes. So far they have refused unless the immediate benefit to them is obvious. The Commission is particularly angry that the Germans refuse to

help fund the most ambitious project of all, a 54km rail-road tunnel under the Alps linking north and south Europe. Clearly, European gridlock is not going to be broken fast.

## US warns of Burundi 'whirlwind of killing'

DAVID ORR  
Bujumbura

More than 15,000 panic-stricken Rwandan refugees were last night said to be scattered along the Tanzanian border, having fled their camp in north-eastern Burundi during the weekend. Their flight followed that of some 15,000 Rwandans from another camp which was reportedly attacked by Burundi soldiers on Saturday.

The refugee crisis has provoked growing fears about Burundi's stability. The United States ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, warned during a weekend visit to Bujumbura that the country will tumble into a whirlwind of killing unless its political and military leaders take evasive action.

"The political situation in Burundi has been tense for some time and we want to make it clear that this country will be isolated if any group tries

to take power by force", she said.

The Rwandan refugees arrived in Burundi having fled their homeland ahead of the victorious advance of Tutsi-dominated rebels seeking to end the genocide which decimated Rwanda in 1994. But now they are also the target of attacks in Burundi.

Some 20 Rwandan Hutus are believed to have been killed and scores injured in an attack on Mugano, a refugee camp near Tanzania, and around 14,000 then fled to Tanzania, where they were given temporary sanctuary.

Only 400 of the refugees from Ntamba camp, however, have been allowed to cross the border into Tanzania. The rest have been told to turn back. The Tanzanian government, which has already allowed more than 700,000 Rwandan Hutus to settle within its borders, has long insisted that it does not have the resources to support such

a large refugee population.

This weekend's exodus of Rwandan Hutus towards Tanzania echoes events at the end of last March, when more than 50,000 Rwandan refugees left their camp in northern Burundi after an attack by the Tutsi-dominated Burundian army. In that incident, Tanzania closed its borders, leaving the refugees stranded by the roadside, unable to continue and afraid to return to their camp.

There are now more than 135,000 Rwandan Hutus living in camps in Burundi. In all, nearly 2 million Rwandan Hutus fled their country after the overthrow of the extremist Hutu regime which masterminded the 1994 genocide of Tutsis and moderate Hutus. Most of the refugees are refusing to return home lest they be subjected to revenge attacks and persecution by surviving Tutsis.

The attacks on Rwandan refugees in Burundi are symp-



War victims: Women who fled the Burundi fighting

tomatic of the growing violence gripping this country, which has the same ethnic mix as its neighbour: 85 per cent Hutu and 15 per cent Tutsi. Many fear that Burundi could fall victim to a genocidal cataclysm similar to that which left nearly 1 million dead in Rwanda the year before last.

The Burundian government, an uneasy coalition of Hutu and Tutsi parties, seems paralysed as the country slides ever deeper into chaos and civil war. President Sylvestre Ntibunganya, a Hutu, and Prime Minister Antoine Nduwayo, a Tutsi, have become increasingly marginalised

in the face of mounting agitation by the extremists.

It is the Tutsi-dominated army which is now largely deciding the turn of events. The capital, Bujumbura, has been effectively "cleansed" of Hutus, while much of the rest of the country is at the mercy of the army and of extremist militias.

The most recent round of fighting between Burundi's Hutus and Tutsis began after the assassination in October 1993 of the country's first elected Hutu president, Melchior Ndadaye. Since then, more than 100,000 people have been killed in ethnic fighting.

## Mandela meets rival to halt Zulu warfare

ROBERT BLOCK  
Johannesburg

President Nelson Mandela today meets his arch rival, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, in Pretoria to discuss the latest plan to stop escalating bloodshed in South Africa's troubled KwaZulu-Natal province.

The men are to start work on preparing a date and venue for an imbizo, or traditional gathering, of Zulu leaders from Mr Mandela's African National Congress and Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party, which have been involved in a horrific turf war in the province for more than a decade.

The imbizo was the brainchild of Mr Mandela and was backed by the Zulu King, Goodwill Zwelithini, last Friday, after the two met at the King's KwaKhangeleni palace in northern KwaZulu-Natal.

The call for the imbizo comes amid growing fears that ANC-Inkatha violence is on the verge of flaring into a full-scale Zulu civil war. By convening an

imbizo, the President and the King hope to get key players from both parties to sit down and work out ways to end the bloodshed, in which about 14,000 people have died.

President Mandela's spokesman, Parks Mankahlan, said Chief Buthelezi has given his support to the imbizo, but pointed out that much work remained to be done before it could be held. At the core of the bloodletting is the political gulf between the ANC's insistence on strong central government and Mr Buthelezi's demand for autonomy. There are doubts over what impact an imbizo will have on ANC-IFP violence unless Mr Mandela and Chief Buthelezi resolve this dispute over provincial powers.

Mr Mandela halted a so-called "third force" after his meeting with King Goodwill Zwelithini. "There are elements who are not members of the IFP or the ANC who are orchestrating this violence, because it is in their interest that we turn back to the days of apartheid," he said.



501/1000

## IN BRIEF

**Photographs: Colorific!**

**Port-au-Prince — President Jean-Bertrand Aristide of Haiti, a former Roman Catholic priest, and Mildred Trouillot, a US-born lawyer, were married on Saturday in a simple ceremony in the garden of his private residence. *Reuter***

meat as with Bill Clinton and his new fence. "Tell Zedillo to give us water and work. We go to the US because we have to. We want to work; we're not lazy. We just want to support our families."

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10  
internationalElections in Palestine: A people so long mired in conflict give the peace accord with Israel an overwhelming vote of approval  
**Jubilant Arafat wins legitimacy** Survivor who lived to lead his nationPATRICK COCKBURN  
Jerusalem

The victory of Yasser Arafat and his Fatah movement in the first Palestinian election for president and a legislative council shows that Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza support the peace accord agreed with Israel. The election and the high turn-out also give legitimacy to the Palestinian leadership and to the Palestinian self-determination, for which they have fought for so long.

Mr Arafat won 84 per cent of the vote, though his opponent, Samiha Khalil, a social worker, was little known. Fatah is likely to dominate the 88-member Palestinian Council, but many well-known independents like Hanan Ashrawi, also were elected. In Gaza, which Mr Arafat has ruled since 1994, officials estimated that the turn-out was 90 per cent.

The decision of a large majority of Palestinians to vote is a blow to the secular and Islamic opposition, which had called for a boycott of the poll. Only in Hebron, south of Jerusalem, was there a poor turn-out, because Israeli troops are still in the city to protect settlers, who marched and demonstrated on election day.

The turn-out in east Jerusalem was only about 30 per cent, but this is explained by lines of Israeli soldiers and police ringing the five post offices where Palestinians were meant to vote. Outside the largely empty post office in Salahuddin Street on Saturday morning, two policemen were telling voters that there were "too many people inside" and to return later.

Jimmy Carter, the former US president, who was leading a team of election monitors, objected to the arrest of Palestinian observers and the use of video cameras by police to identify voters.

"I don't think there is any doubt that they are trying to intimidate," Mr Carter said. Israel appears to have tried to deter Palestinians from casting their vote in order to say that they approved of Israeli rule in

Jerusalem. This tactic may prove counter-productive and make the future of Jerusalem an international issue before its final status comes up for negotiation in May.

If the atmosphere in Jerusalem and Hebron was menacing, the feeling in villages like Jifna, in the centre of the West Bank, was closer to that



Vox populi: A woman in Gaza City prepares to vote

of a village fête. The polling station was in rooms belonging to a local Christian women's society. Inside, villagers cast red ballots for the president and white ballots for the council. As darkness fell, a local man said: "We think about 70 per cent have voted in this district."

In the twisting, muddy lanes of the Jalazoun refugee camp two miles from Jifna, the issue of the election was more contentious. "My family are refugees from 1948 and I don't think these elections can do anything for us," said Qassam Najab, 27, a student. "They won't give us the ability to return to our land. Everyone remembers us during the election campaign. But then they will take

their seats in the Council and do nothing for us."

Outside the polling station in a YMCA centre, Ziad Hamdan, an engineer, was handing out cards urging people to vote for Abed Jawad Saleh, a former mayor of el-Bireh who had been deported by Israel. He stressed that Mr Saleh had tried to improve the dreadful roads in the refugee camp and to do something for the labourers who populate it. When votes were counted, local people like Mr Saleh, who has no money and scarcely campaigned, were doing better than expected against Fatah leaders from abroad.

A reason for the high turn-out may be that more women than expected voted. In Jalazoun an official said that "two-thirds of voters came by 4pm — more women than men, because women are more concerned about these things". This participation by women may also reflect the waning influence of Hamas, which has discouraged women from becoming openly involved in politics since the mid-1990s.

About 68 per cent of people in the West Bank live in villages, but few work in agriculture. Most have been labourers in Israel and are badly affected by the periodic closure of the Israeli border since 1993. The economic future of the West Bank, therefore, will remain dependent on Israeli decisions and not on those of the newly elected President and Council.

The withdrawal of Israeli troops from West Bank towns last month and the elections are seen by Palestinian officials as ending the threat that Israel would annex the West Bank as part of the Land of Israel.

A rally by about 10,000 settlers and right-wingers in Zion Square in west Jerusalem on Saturday night primarily emphasised the threat to Jerusalem.

The main slogan above the platform read: "All hands to the defence of Jerusalem". The theme seemed implicitly to accept that the battle for greater Israel was over.



Local hero: The last of Yasser Arafat's popularity has been his ability to lead the Palestinians for a quarter of a century despite great disasters Photograph: Reuters

PATRICK COCKBURN  
Jerusalem

His political obituary was written many times. "Bye, bye PLO," said Zbigniew Brzezinski, then the US National Security Adviser, with famous lack of foresight almost 20 years ago. Driven from the West Bank in 1967, from Jordan in 1970 and from Beirut in 1982, Yasser Arafat, elected President of the Palestinian Authority at the weekend, has survived political and military defeats that would have destroyed most national leaders.

The reason for his survival is simple enough: for a quarter of a century Palestinians have regarded him as their national symbol. His 84 per cent poll on Saturday does not quite make the point, because he faced no opponent of stature. The real test of Mr Arafat's popularity was his ability to continue to lead the Palestinians after great tactical disasters.

Palestinians understood that he was almost always inferior in strength to his opponents, notably Israel and the US, but at other moments, Syria, Iraq and Jordan. If there were miscalculations, then they often were not Mr Arafat's alone, but were backed by the majority of Palestinians. It was they who gave massive support to Iraq when it invaded Kuwait in 1990, and paid a high price for it when the Kuwaitis expelled hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

Mr Arafat, 66, has always given priority to making sure that his movement would live to fight another day. To the anger of militants, no battle was ever fought to the last round. There was always a new ally to be found when old friends turned hostile, giving Mr Arafat a reputation for slipperiness. Yet he has always shown sure judgement of what, at the end of the day,

Palestinian public opinion would accept.

He was always aided by the tendency of his opponents to under-estimate him. Mr Brzezinski was not alone in this. Others who have tried and failed to eliminate him politically, and probably personally, include some of the hardest men in the Middle East, such as General Ariel Sharon of Israel and President Hafez al-Assad of Syria.

They underestimated him because he has few of the personal attributes of a national leader. He is a dreadful public speaker: in interviews he often appears shifty and insincere; he has a much-criticised fondness for appointing courtiers to important positions. At the same time he has never been a bloodthirsty man, though he has lived in a bloodthirsty world.

Even when feuding with the leaders of other organisations in the Palestine Liberation Organisation, he seldom cut them off from funds.

Mr Arafat's support for Iraq in 1990 did not wholly fail. The Gulf war increased the power of the US in the region. President George Bush pushed Israel into talks with the Palestinians. A row between the US and the right-wing government in Jerusalem helped Labour win the election in 1992. A year later the Oslo accords were agreed, giving Palestinians autonomy and something close to a state, though hedged with restrictions on its authority.

Opponents of Oslo said it was a sell-out on refugees from 1948, Palestinian prisoners, Israeli settlements, Jerusalem and borders. Mr Arafat would have none of it. He was desperate to establish facts on the map of what had once been Palestine, even if he was accused of being a Palestinian Buthekezi, ruling isolated cantons.

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THE INDEPENDENT



Peter Singer, inspiration of the animal liberation movement, talks about a humane, non-religious ethic to Andrew Marr

# Just a step away from animal rights

Q: Professor Singer, in your new book you talk about an ethical revolution and the collapse of our traditional ethical order. What do you mean by that?

A: The traditional ethic has seen human beings as the centre of the moral universe and, indeed, the only thing that really matters. We are now at the stage of a kind of Copernican revolution in ethics: we are dethroning human beings from the centre of the moral sphere, and we are including the other sentient beings with whom we share this planet for the first time as morally significant beings.

Q: Why is this happening? Is it because of the death of religion, which traditionally put man somewhere between the angels and the animals, or is it because we understand more about the need to get on with other creatures in the biosphere?

A: I think it is both. The fact that we are able to think ethically, independently of religion, is a tremendously important thing that has come into its own only in this century. Environmental issues have certainly given us more awareness of the way we are interlinked with other beings. And, on top of that, I would say that the full implications of the Darwinian revolution in thought are coming home to us: the great gulf, that for so many centuries has separated humans from other animals, we can now see not as a gulf but a continuum, a matter of small steps between us and other species.

Q: Well, it is small steps, but common sense suggests there is also a very large gap between our ability to make ethical choices, our impact on the world, and theirs. There is still a sharp dividing line. Darwin notwithstanding, between us and even the great apes.

A: There are significant differences. But the most important principles of ethics apply to all human beings, and when you look at human infants, or humans with severe intellectual disabilities, then there is not that gap any more between humans and non-human animals - in fact, there is quite an overlap between some of them.

Q: Isn't that because in the case of the human infant we are respecting their potential to become a fully sentient being, and in the case of humans with extreme disabilities we are, as it were, honouring their past and their possibility of being human?

A: As far as infants are concerned, yes, it is reasonable to talk about their potential. But when we look at those with permanent severe disabilities and those who have never had the capacities for the sort of consciousness we are talking about, I think what we really respect and acknowledge in them is their



On the march: Singer's ideas have inspired many to demonstrate on behalf of animal liberation groups

sentience, their capacity still to feel something, for their lives to go well or badly in some meaningful sense. And we should be aware that the same is true of many non-human animals. They are sentient, they can suffer, their lives can go well or badly from their own internal point of view. There is a subjective awareness.

Q: Are you saying, in a sense, that we have to extend our concept of pity to other species? And, if so, how far down the species chain do you go? I can understand it very well with a dog or a chimpanzee; I cannot understand it so clearly with a snail or a haddock.

A: I would look at it slightly differently. I would say we look at the idea of human equality, which has been a very important idea in the 20th century, and we ask what that is based on. It is not based on having a certain level of intelligence or self-awareness, but on a principle of equal consideration of people's interests. We ought to extend that principle of equal consideration of interests to non-human beings.

Q: But if I extend the idea of equality to a member of another race, I am extending it to somebody who can think, reason, talk, exactly like I can, or in a very similar way. Once I try to jump the species barrier,

surely it is an entirely different thing? A: Well, I don't think that all animals are equal to humans in every respect. But where they can suffer, I think their suffering ought to have equal weight with similar sufferings of human beings.

Q: So if a deer suffers in a trap, it

is similar - yes, it does matter just as much.

Q: If there were two traps, one with the human, one with the deer, there would be no question in your mind that it was more morally correct to go first to rescue the human than to rescue the deer?

A: If it is merely a matter of going

carnivorous life in the raw, and the fact that all biological life involves suffering and pain, why is it that the human has a particular responsibility to alleviate and reduce suffering on the planet?

A: Human beings have that responsibility because we are self-aware, capable of moral choice. We do not regard toddlers as morally responsible because they cannot reflect and make that choice. Non-human animals generally also cannot reflect and make that choice, although perhaps dogs or chimpanzees can have some sort of moral responsibility, and we may be able to hold them morally responsible to a degree. But they are more like toddlers. So the real burden of responsibility can only lie where we have the capacity to reflect and choose.

Q: I am interested in where you come from philosophically here, because it does seem to me that a benign squeamishness affects us as we become more civilised. In this country we are no longer enthusiastic about bear-baiting or cock fights; there is growing worry about the suffering caused to dolphins... isn't your position merely the progression of civilised squeamishness, rather than an ethically new viewpoint?

A: I would see it as the application of our capacity to reason and our

**'The suffering of animals ought to have equal weight with the similar sufferings of human beings' - Peter Singer**



matters as much as if a human was suffering in that trap? A: It matters as much if it is a similar sort of suffering.

The human may have all sorts of anxieties and fears that the deer does not. The human may be able to say, "I am going to be stuck in this trap, my family are going to wonder where I am, they will be beside themselves with worry", and so on. But the deer may also have a kind of blind panic that causes it to suffer in different ways.

So where we can say the suffering

first, I think there would be a question. I would say to the human, "Don't worry, I'll be back for you in five minutes," which you cannot say to the deer, and I would get the deer out of there straight away.

Q: If you could choose only one? A: If this was going to be fatal or to cause permanent injury, or something of that sort, I would go to the human, because I think the suffering would probably be greater.

Q: Given the predatory nature of

## PETER SINGER

Born: 1946 in Melbourne, Australia. Career: He is professor of philosophy and deputy director of the Centre for Human Bioethics at Monash University, Melbourne. He was founding president of the International Association of Bioethics, President of the Australian and New Zealand Federation of Animal Societies. He will stand for election for the Australian Greens in Victoria in the next federal elections. Selected books: *Animal Liberation*, *The Expanding Circle*, *Practical Ethics*, *How Are We to Live?*

Singer has been popularly known as the father of the 'animal liberation' movement since his book of the same name appeared 20 years ago. His works have inspired thousands to vegetarianism. Protesters say his beliefs about infanticide and euthanasia are similar to those of the Nazis. He has been banned in Austria and Germany. Academic critics say his thinking is unoriginal, a resurrection of a discredited philosophy.

He regards 4 February 1993 as representing the end of millennia of religious domination of morality. It was the day British law lords ruled that Anthony Bland, in a coma since the Hillsborough disaster of 1989, could be killed by his doctors.

He hopes to found a state for great apes called 'Gorillastan', to come under the auspices of the United Nations.

this is *Homo sapiens*'s burden in the same way?

A: I think we do have a burden, yes, because we are the species that dominates the planet, in the simple sense of having the power to affect all other beings much more than they have the power to affect us.

Q: Are there circumstances in which you would sacrifice a human life for non-human animal lives?

A: You have to look at the levels and capacities of that life. Take, for example, a human being with no capacity for consciousness - a baby born with severe brain damage or something of that sort - and a chimpanzee with a high capacity for consciousness and self-awareness.

If in some way you could save the life of the chimpanzee by taking the life of the baby, perhaps by doing an organ transplant or something, I would think that was justifiable, because I think the chimpanzee is a more aware being, a more sensitive being, and therefore a more morally significant being.

Q: What would you say to the animal liberationists of an extreme kind who, from time to time, appear to regard human life as less than the lives of animals suffering in laboratories and so on? Because once you remove the specialness of human life, you can open the door to all sorts of extremism...

A: Well, there are extremists and fundamentalists in Christianity, in Islam, and in other religions, and sadly there are one or two in the animal movement as well. I think they have been extremely few in number, given the millions of supporters the animal liberation movement has had. Those whom you could describe as putting animal life ahead of human life - I have to say I have never met one. I have nothing in common with that kind of fundamentalist approach.

Q: And do you think in the end it is going to be possible to construct a humane, viable ethic, without any religion at all, without any kind of traditional, generationally learnt underpinning? Can we break our way through to this new Copernican revolution without pain and bloodshed?

A: I certainly believe we can. There is already a substantial movement towards that ethic in many developed societies - the religious veneer, if you like, is starting to disappear, and we have already taken major steps towards that non-religious, humane, compassionate ethic. All that is necessary now is for us to stand up and see that we have taken those steps, and put the finishing touches to the details of what that ethic is going to be like.

Peter Singer is Andrew Marr's guest on 'The Big Idea' at 11.15pm on BBC 2 on Wednesday

## DIARY

### History men hone insults

Sarah Bradford, the viscountess whose biography of the Queen earned its noble author an uncustomed flurry of flak last week, is to face her critics in public. I can reveal. She has been persuaded to take part in a debate at the Royal Society of Literature on 22 February with her fellow royal historians Hugo Vickers and Philip Ziegler. The topic is 'Royalty and restraint: should royal biographers observe a special set of rules?'

It should make for an evening of polished insults. The viscountess's book - which

claims that Prince Philip had two close extramarital relationships and that a former lady-in-waiting killed herself because she was sacked - has reportedly lost her the esteem of some of her peers.

Vickers, for one, is puzzled by what he describes as the "surprisingly gossipy" extracts in a broadsheet paper. "I myself," he says, "believe you have in play by special rules, because otherwise you just can't get the access."

The evening should clarify whether or not Sarah Bradford used the royal archives for her research. "It seems that she has gained a lot of material close to the palace, so one assumes she got a certain amount of access to the archives," says Vickers. "And yet, if you do that, you have to sign a document stating that the Queen can see, and amend, the book prior to publication."

Potential gatecrashers from the media should heed Vickers's warning: "The RSL is a distinguished, learned group. The last thing we want is Sky TV cameras."

### Off at sunset

Channel 4's weekend music programme *The White Room* featured the young turks of rock music, Blur, and the man



Little Richard: the hopping stops when the sabbath starts

who all hint invented the genre. Little Richard, now well into his sixties and creaking a little as he climbs on top of his piano.

Although they seemed to viewers to have been on the show together, Blur and Little Richard never actually met. Little Richard recorded his set last Friday afternoon; the other acts performed before a studio audience on Friday night.

The man who gave the language awopopolopopolambam, and twice renounced rock'n'roll to become a Christian preacher, has converted to Judaism and told Channel 4 he would not perform on a Friday night, the start of the Jewish sabbath. So he rocked and he rolled at two in the afternoon, showering a hastily convened makeshift studio audience with religious tracts as he did so.

### Times change

Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells may think twice in future before reaching for his pen. He may find he receives some unwanted communication by return of post. One letter writer to the *Times* last week received junk mail from two organisations. One, from a travel agent, began: "It was a pleasure to read your recent letter to the Editor of the *Times* and I hope that you will find the information contained in this letter useful..."

### Annie's angst

There was one scene from Friday's Commons launch of a new political TV soap opera that I would have no hesitation

in putting into the script right away. The Tory MP Michael Brown, adviser on *Annie's Bar*, was busily telling journalists about the true identities of certain characters in the series. This brought a scowl to the face of one onlooker, Derek Draper, formerly known as the spin doctor's spin doctor (he used to advise Peter Mandelson). "He's giving too much away," muttered an agitated Draper, under his breath.

Brown was oblivious. "And here's another hint," he continued. "If you were to think that one of the characters was Peter Mandelson you wouldn't be far wrong."

At this, the old "master-protect" button went off in Draper's brain. He marched up to Brown, put an arm round him and swept him away.

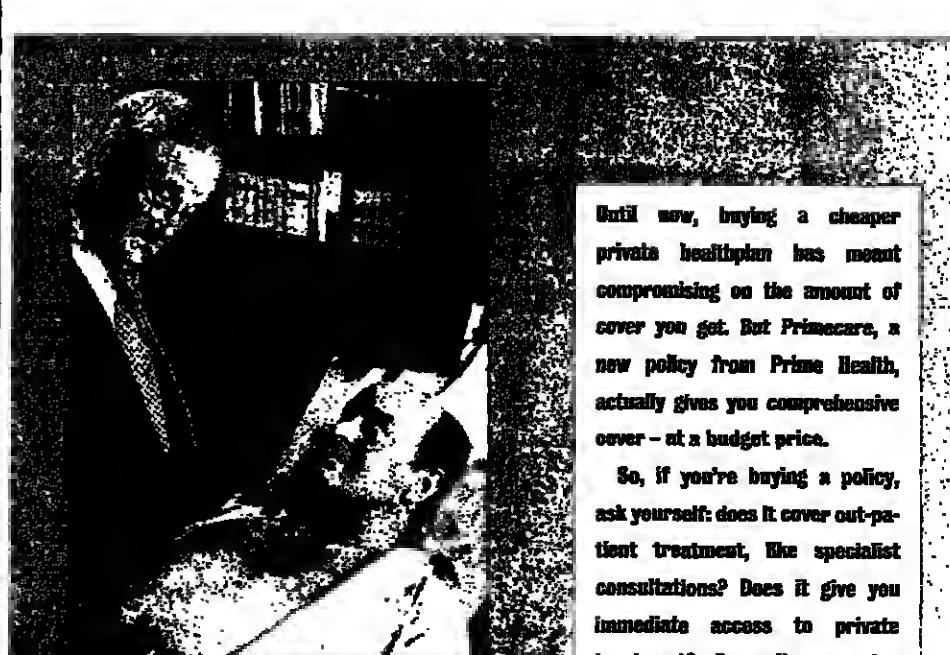
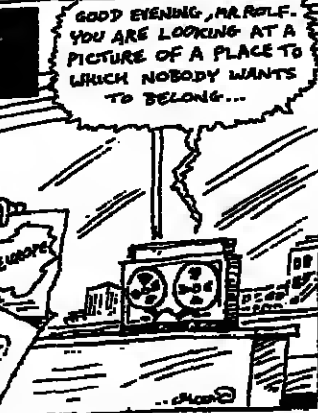
### Out of puff

Some employers ban smoking and tell the addicts to like it or lump it. Some allow them a room to gather and blow smoke at each other. Only a publisher would give them their own personal analysis. The bosses at Macmillan are offering their 600 staff either nicotine patches or hypnotherapy sessions to smooth the transition to a nicotine-free zone. Authors wondering why it takes so long for their manuscripts to be returned now know. The editors are all in therapy.

Eagle Eye

### Generation Why

by Tony Reeve and Steve Way



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# THE INDEPENDENT

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## Time to prop up Europe

Recession is haunting Europe. The situation in Germany and France may not be catastrophic, but it is very serious. Growth is slowing, consumer confidence is falling and unemployment rising. However, the most important consequences of this downturn will not be economic, they will be political. Recession and retrenchment will test the political stability of both Germany and France as well as casting a long shadow over the European Union's plans for further integration.

The signs of contraction are unmistakable. The German economy stagnated in the third quarter of 1995 and activity is expected to fall in the final three months of the year. A big jump in unemployment, to almost 10 per cent, in December has rung alarm bells across the country.

In France, where the unemployment rate is 11.5 per cent, the outlook for 1996 is even bleaker. According to a leaked report from the labour ministry, growth could be little more than 1 per cent. Consumer confidence is at its lowest for almost 10 years.

Across Europe economic conditions have deteriorated much more and much faster than expected. One principal reason is that public spending is being cut back by governments attempting to meet the Maastricht treaty criteria for inclusion within the economic and monetary union. The race to meet the EMU 1999 deadline has led to tax hikes and spending cuts, which are taking spending power out of the European economy.

In Germany, another powerful factor is at work. The slowdown there may be in part structural: the product of the high price of unification, the highest labour costs in the world and an overvalued cur-

rency. Unemployment is rising because companies have responded to lower growth and weaker export markets by making workers redundant. Small and medium-sized companies are not recruiting. German industry is still far stronger than its British counterpart, but it is going through a bout of restructuring not unlike that enforced by Margaret Thatcher in the early Eighties, when sterling was strong and public spending was cut back.

The response to this slowdown is equally obvious. In the short term a halt has to be called to further efforts at fiscal retrenchment since they would simply deepen the downturn. At the same time, the Bundesbank should loosen interest rates. More important are structural reforms, particularly to Germany's highly regulated labour market, which would help speed its adjustment to slower growth.

The costs of inaction could be high. Already the fragility of France's political system has been exposed by the strains provoked by reining in public spending. The strikes last year were not simply in response to cuts in welfare spending, they amounted to an attack on the French élite.

The German political system is more robust. It is unlikely that change there will be accompanied by the kind of conflict we have seen in France. But there are darker clouds on the horizon. Continental Europe is probably embarking on a period of growth far lower than it has been used to. The frustration that will breed will cast a pall not just over EMU but also over the wider cause of European integration. That is why governments should take this slowdown seriously and nip it in the bud.

## Harman gets her priorities right

Harriet Harman's son, Joe, is not a politician. He has not spent years debating composite motions at the Labour Party conference about comprehensive and opted-out schools. Nor has he stood for Parliament advocating particular educational policies. If Labour wins the general election, Joe will not be in the running for a cabinet post. He is simply an 11-year-old boy, who, like any child, needs the best schooling available.

And that is exactly what Ms Harman and her husband, Jack Dromey, a senior Transport and General Workers' Union official, are trying to provide. They have decided to send him to St Olave's School in Bromley, Kent, after he beat 600 other children in an examination to gain one of just 90 places in the grammar school. It is a fine school, state-funded, where the teachers are committed and the results are good. Most pupils go on to university.

Any parent would be proud that a son had a chance to thrive in this school's excellent academic environment and to enjoy its generous tree-lined rugby fields. They would be right to reflect on the fact that such facilities within the state sector are available only to the lucky few. But no parent, not even Harriet Harman, can be held responsible for the uneven nature of Britain's state education system.

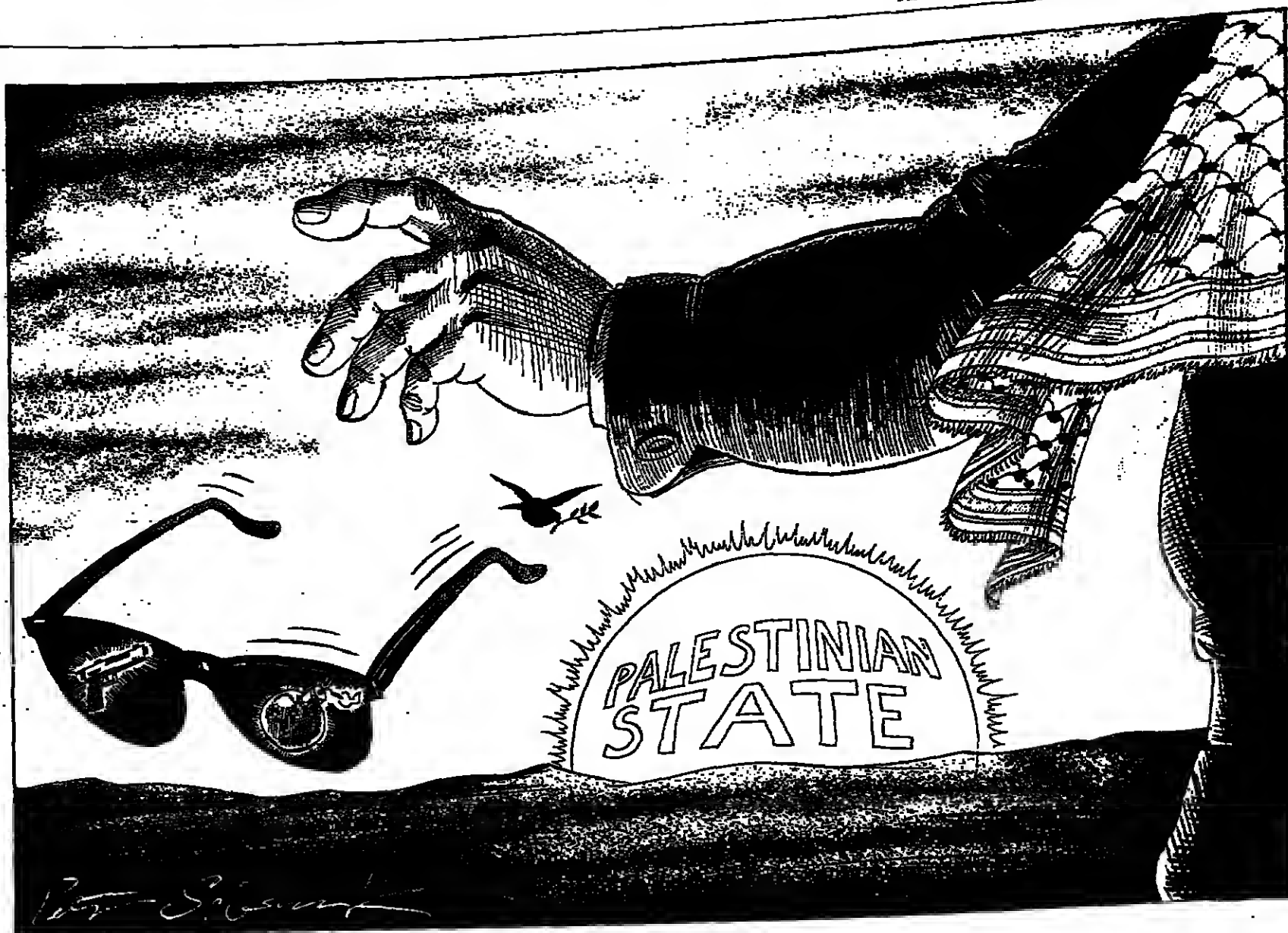
Yet neither the political opportunists in the Conservative Party nor the puritanical ideologues of the Labour Party have been able to keep their lips buttoned.

Tory critics say the decision exposes Ms Harman as a hypocrite and makes a

nonsense of Labour's opposition to selection in state schools. Combined with the Blair's decision to send his son to a grant-maintained school, this latest controversy is being seized upon as vindication of the Government's education policies. Meanwhile, Clare Short, Ms Harman's fellow frontbencher, yesterday made a thinly veiled attack on her colleague, who would have to "answer to her constituents" for what she had done. Ms Short is unlikely to be the only Labour politician to make known her distaste for Joe being allowed to attend St Olave's.

All this politics taken too far. Whatever the rights and wrongs of this country's education policies, the debate should be confined to public life. The children of politicians do not choose their parents and should not have to suffer for their beliefs. It is also hypocritical to expect a parent, even a politician with strong views, to do anything but the best for her children. The real crime would have been if Ms Harman had stunted her son's potential achievement and made his progress come second to her own political ambitions.

Indeed, it is reassuring to see Ms Harman prepared to take the flak for her choice rather than pretending to be an ideological saint. As Labour makes its claim to govern, most people would prefer politicians whose actions reflect what they themselves would do in the circumstances. Voters are certainly likely to be more comfortable with a politician who gets her priorities right and puts the interests of her children first.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Car ownership, not class, is the great divider

From Mr John Stewart

Sir: It is a pity that Hamish McRae in his comprehensive look at the car ("Driving a social revolution", 17 January) seems to have fallen into the trap of believing that safer cars mean safer roads. In fact, over the past decades our roads have become more dangerous. The main reason for the fall in fatalities is the marked decline in pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists using the roads.

In 1971, 80 per cent of seven- and eight-year-olds went to school on their own (mostly on foot or by bicycle); by 1991 it was 9 per cent. The main reason parents gave for accompanying their children to school was fear of traffic. Mr McRae presumably means "everyone who is anyone", because "everyone" includes the many non-drivers whose lives have been made significantly worse by the immoderate level of car ownership: whether through pollution, noise and visual degradation, the slowing of buses, the decimation of the rail network, danger to children, increased opportunities for criminals, and the cost of various hidden motorising subsidies, including for health care and road space in town centres.

Far from breaking down class divisions, the "Great Car Society" has imposed a kind of caste system in which car drivers obtain the benefits and everyone else suffers. More democracy is surely found on public transport: at least the different classes are travelling on the same train. Yours sincerely, ANTONY ALEXANDER Douglas, Isle of Man 19 January

From Mr Antony Alexander

Sir: Hamish McRae describes the car as

a machine of democracy: breaking down differentiation by class and replacing it with differentiation by wealth. Everyone is equal in a traffic jam, but each can proclaim their wealth and status by the car in which they sit.

Mr McRae presumably means "everyone who is anyone", because "everyone" includes the many non-drivers whose lives have been made significantly worse by the immoderate level of car ownership: whether through pollution, noise and visual degradation, the slowing of buses, the decimation of the rail network, danger to children, increased opportunities for criminals, and the cost of various hidden motorising subsidies, including for health care and road space in town centres.

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From Mr David Seymour

Sir: Just imagine the oceans and airways jammed tight with solo navigators in the way our roads are. If motorists had to pay the full cost of their "freedom", including that of damage to health and the environment, they would be taxed out of existence.

I realise that as a white, middle-aged man I am almost an extinct species on the buses, but the crowded public transport I experience regularly shows me all too clearly that car ownership is by no means as universal as many claim. And many users of public transport choose to be so: I certainly would not have it otherwise.

Yours sincerely, DAVID L. SEYMOUR London, SE4 18 January

### Held back by the stakeholders

From Mr Randhir Singh Bains

Sir: Tony Blair's new doctrine of a "stakeholding" economy is a revolutionary idea.

However, in order to function effectively, the "stakeholding" economy, as the East Asian experience has shown, needs to be driven not by the state but by a responsive value-system: a system that places group interests above individual freedom and rights.

Unfortunately, Britain has no such group-oriented value system currently at its disposal. With the atomisation of society in Britain, individualism has taken precedence over communitarianism, thereby adversely

affecting the credibility of all social institutions. The undermining of social institutions has consequently increased the role of the state in social and other welfare. It is, therefore, difficult to see how such a highly individualised society can possibly act as a driving force behind Mr Blair's "stakeholding" economy. There is undoubtedly a need to evolve an economic system that involves all people, not just a privileged few. But in the absence of an appropriate value system, the "stakeholding" economic model is likely to impede rather than promote economic growth in this country.

Yours faithfully, RANDHIR SINGH BAINS Gants Hill, Essex 21 January

### A clear view of St Paul's

From Mr C. M. Bouck-Standen

Sir: The recent correspondence regarding the proposed redevelopment of Paternoster Square reminds me of the comments of my late mother, who worked at a bookshop in Paternoster Row in the Thirties.

She described the shop as a rat-infested hell-hole which was frequented by clergymen who came to the shop for a free read. She considered that the Germans had done us all a favour by reducing the shops to rubble.

Her point was, of course, that a picturesque and pleasing exterior sometimes hides an internal squalor. My personal view is that nothing that is built there can complement the cathedral - certainly not another array of classical buildings. The area should be cleared and a park created with pedestrian access only, allowing a full view of Wren's triumph.

Yours faithfully, C. M. BOUCK-STANDEN Lingfield, Surrey 17 January

### BBC education

From Mr J. K. Anand

Sir: I have been listening to the BBC World Service and its predecessors for more than 50 years, starting in India during the war. Even now I listen to the World Service during Radio 4's hours of silence and when I am abroad, wherever I can. In my view, the World Service provides better news and views than any other radio/TV that I have encountered and is indeed superior to the British newspapers.

If cuts must be made in the Foreign Office budget, so be it ("The Empire talks back", 17 January). But the World Service should be ring-fenced. Britons in Britain will become better-educated in world affairs if they tune in to the World Service. Yours truly, J. K. ANAND Peterborough, Cambridgeshire 17 January

### No dispute in the Post Office

From Mr Alan Johnson

Sir: Your report on industrial relations in the Post Office ("The last post", 17 January) was, in parts, amusing (I was described as a militant when I led the union campaign against privatisation, a moderate in your sister paper last Sunday and a right-winger in Wednesday's article), but it did highlight the tensions caused in a business where the workforce has not seen the success of the business reflected in their terms and conditions (86 per cent of delivery staff still work the same compulsory six-day week that was introduced in 1847).

I can assure your readers that no one in the Communication Workers Union is seeking a national dispute. Our objective is to provide the high-quality delivery service that the public expects, with a professional and mainly full-time workforce on manageable deliveries that do not require breaches to health and safety standards or submission to a harsh and repressive disciplinary regime.

We are determined to achieve these objectives through discussion and negotiation. If that determination is shared by the employer, there is no reason why we should not succeed.

Yours sincerely, ALAN JOHNSON Joint General Secretary Communication Workers Union London, SW4 18 January

### Youthful follies

From Ms Jane Lawson

Sir: I, too, have a copy of Delia Smith's *Frugal Food* (letter, 19 January). Sadly, the price of such items as whiting, shoulder of lamb and even streaky bacon make them a rare treat for those on a tight budget. Others, such as mutton, are things of blessed memory only. And as for oxtail - think BSE. I also suspect that Ms Smith might be just a soupçon embarrassed by some of the recipes: pizza with cream cheese, for example. Still, who would not be embarrassed by youthful follies?

Yours faithfully, JANE LAWSON London, SE7

From Mr Jack Moore

Sir: Delia Smith is famous for getting details right. The same cannot be said for Louise Levene (17 January), whose costings assume that if the recipe calls for two eggs and the shop sells them in packs of six, then chuck all of them in. God knows what it will taste like when she has thrown in the whole jar of nutmegs. Yours sincerely, JACK MOORE Newcastle upon Tyne 18 January

### Conservatively old

From Mr N. Collins

Sir: Is the apparent demise of the Young Conservatives, described by Jim White ("Is the party over for Maggie's kids?", 17 January), a reflection of the fortunes of their parent party, or is it that the current generation has recognised something that should have been obvious all along: namely, that the phrase "Young Conservative" is a contradiction in terms?

Yours faithfully, N. COLLINS Godalming, Surrey 17 January

### 'Cleansing' in West Papua

From The Rev Dr C. Garland

Sir: We were pleased to read the article by Aidan Rankin on the situation in West Papua. We worked for many years with the Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea, and count the people of that land as personal friends and colleagues. They are, as Melanesians, of the same race as the people of West Papua. Melanesians are a different racial group from Indonesians. The only logic that links West Papua to Indonesia is the logic of empire, since the only reason for unity was the control by their former Dutch colonists.

The local people of West Papua have every right to mistrust the Indonesian military, who show them scant respect. The Indonesians want to drive the Dani tribe from their traditional land, on which their way of life and hence their very existence depends, in order to get at the minerals underneath. The ripping out of the minerals is a ripping out of a people. The concomitant policy of transmigration Indonesians into West Papua will have the effect of smothering the local culture. How can ethnic cleansing be more excusable in West Papua than it is anywhere else?

Sincerely, C. GARLAND N. GARLAND Messing, Essex 17 January

### Hell is in Norway

From Mr John Challenger

Sir: Nicolas Walter, of the Rationalist Press Association, is being less than rational when he suggests (letters, 16 January) that Jesus, as reported in the gospels, spoke of a "literal and physical Hell". It is much more likely that Jesus spoke rhetorically, referring to Isaiah's description (66.24) of the wicked after death as like the rubbish on the dump outside the wall of Jerusalem - the dry burnt by fire, the wet eaten by worms. Admittedly, the Church later turned pictorial language into literal, and this needs putting right, but we should not hold Jesus responsible. Yours rationally, JOHN CHALLENGER Catholics for a Changing Church Cardiff 17 January

From Mr Bernard Sharp

Sir: Theological considerations aside, Hell is in Norway, some 50km east of Trondheim. To the best of my knowledge, there is no place called Heaven, but there are more than 10 Paradises. Yours sincerely, BERNARD SHARP Salford, West Yorkshire 17 January

### Imperial weight-loss

From Mr Nicholas Organ

Sir: While also delighted that metrication renders fog less dense (letter, 18 January), I fear it may also make one fatter. The lifts at my office happily accept 20 people when the loading limit is expressed in pounds, but only 18 when it is given in kilograms. Slimmers might well be advised to stick to imperial units.

Yours faithfully, NICHOLAS ORGAN Huddersfield, West Yorkshire 19 January

## Melvyn's rules for the conversation game

Every Monday morning on Radio 4 there is a programme called *The Conversation Game*.

Well, it is not actually called *The Conversation Game*. It is called *Start The Week*. But it might as well be called *The Conversation Game*, because it is one of the few radio programmes left in which you can hear conversation being played according to the traditional rules of the game.

What happens is that Melvyn Bragg gathers together in his studio a random selection of one scientist, one author, one person involved in a big TV production and a token person who is always a woman, and he plays the game of conversation with them. This is not such a tightly ruled game as *Just a Minute*, and in fact the rules of the game called conversation are so loose and so unwritten that not many people realise it is a game at all, but game it is, and if you should want to play it at home, it helps if you know some of the rules.

For instance, you have to know that you do not need to stick to grammatical rules. You often hear quite literate people saying hideously ungrammatical things such as: "He is the kind of person who, if he



MILES KINGSTON

had lived in the 19th century, people would not have been able to categorise him." In conversation it does not always matter if things are plural or singular, which is why people with a good education can be heard to say: "These are the kind of thing which..." instead of the correct "kinds of thing which...". We now accept things like this in conversation.

But the rule of conversation which I would like to draw attention to this morning is the rule which says: "In any given situation, you can use one fashionable adjective to show that you approve of a thing, and another one to show that you disapprove of exactly the same thing."

Let me give you an example. If, as sometimes happens, one of Mr Bragg's guests says that television is a cold medium compared to radio or

literature, meaning that you can provide an imaginative response to radio or books whereas watching TV is a passive, non-participatory, non-creative activity, Mr Bragg can always be relied upon to get very cross and defend TV - the last time I heard him do this, he told the guest that she was talking absolute nonsense, and that anyone who had ever sat round a TV set with other people watching a vital football match, cheering and groaning every inch of the way, would know that television could be highly participatory.

This shut the woman up, because it was quite a telling example. However, if at any time another guest brings forward such an experience or example to back up something with which Mr Bragg disagrees, he will often dismiss it as purely anecdotal.

Do you see the technique at work? If you do it, it is "telling". If someone else does it, it is "anecdotal". Same thing, different adjective.

Another example. I watched England playing a sort of rugby football against France on Saturday, in the hopes of being entertained, and as I slumped lower and lower into my seat, hoping I would stay awake until we got to the Ireland vs Scotland game, I knew it would only be

a matter of time before some commentator would notice that neither side looked like scoring a try and would say something like: "Well, this may not be the most skilful/entertaining game in the world, but no one could deny that it is very exciting." And it duly happened. "Exciting" is the word rugby commentators use to mean that the scores are quite close and that the two sides are so dully matched that they both have a chance of winning. There is another adjective which can be applied to such a match. It is "boring", and it is the word that would be used by everyone in the world who was not English or French, and by many who were.

Here are some more pairs of words. Those on the left are approving, those on the right disapproving.

Romantic	Sentimental
Reductionist	Simplistic
Erotic	Dirty
Protean	Shapeless
Economic	Cheap
Low-budget	Shoddy
Traditional	Formulaic
High-quality	Elitist
Personal	Incomprehensible

Please send me a blank cheque for full list.



# Ahead of Paddy Ashdown's key speech tonight, we offer two contrasting views on cross-party co-operation

## Should Lib and Lab lie down together?



**No, Conrad Russell says: if Tony Blair wants a coalition he'd better show us some real policies**

With a bumpy pitch and a blinding light, spin may appear to be turning much faster than it is. Some of the build-up to Paddy Ashdown's speech this evening are likely to get. Nevertheless, Paddy will ask us to think about the pattern of post-election politics.

Any member of the House of Lords must agree with Paddy's repeated calls for "partnership politics". Cross-party co-operation, of many sorts, should be commoner than it is. I agree with Helmut Kohl that "you should not go into politics if you are not prepared to make coalitions".

There are two indispensable conditions for a coalition. One is that a party entering a coalition must prefer its partner to the alternative. The other is that it must be possible to work out a common programme. In 1992, a large majority of Liberal Democrats thought it possible to satisfy these two conditions with Neil Kinnock. Today, many of us are less sure of these conditions with Tony Blair.

The fear exists that, just as Thatcherism is on its deathbed, Mr Blair might give it a new lease of life. If he wants a coalition with the Liberal Democrats, that is the fear he must dispel. Paddy Ashdown's Glasgow speech in September issued a challenge to the Labour leaders. The invitation to vote against the Tory tax cuts in the Budget (which they ducked), and to commit themselves to bringing Railtrack back into the public sector (which they have not yet answered) were part of the minimum terms for co-operation. Labour must have the courage to offer a real alternative to the Tories.

We cannot tackle the problem by a shopping list: governments daily meet unforeseen issues. If those are to be tackled, coalition partners, like marriage partners, must understand and respect each other's ideology, otherwise they will be perpetually taken by surprise. Liberalism is about the link between consent, law and liberty. The heart of the matter is that no one should have to be hounded by the arbitrary power of another. This is why issues which to Labour seem unconnected, like unfair dismissal, asylum, judicial review and government power to make law without consent by regulation, are to us part of a single threat. Liberalism was never the anti-state creed of the Thatcher parody; we understand that liberty must be protected both from and by the state.

That means we must reverse the Thatcherite anti-state ideology so brilliantly satirised by Roy Jenkins in a speech last Thursday. We must be prepared to spend money and raise taxes if necessary. Otherwise the next time we are in a tight financial corner we would have to allow the service concerned to go down the route of care in the community and student finance, because it was not admissible to raise taxes to save it.

Liberal Democrats do not think the victims of care in the community or social security disqualification are enjoying liberty. Freedom from starvation is a form of liberty and, when all costs are considered, there is no cheaper alternative to the welfare state. We believe, as Paddy said at Glasgow, that "taxes are the subscription to a civilised society". We think the voters have learnt that lesson the hard way.

Many years ago, Paddy was asked which of the legacies of Thatcherism he would reverse first, and he replied, "Centralisation." The Thatcherite programme of forcing us to be free has strengthened the executive even while attacking the state: it has elevated the monarch in Downing Street instead. This must be reversed.

That is why proportional representation is not just a tactical objective. It is part of a larger ideological programme in which devolution, European law, local government and incorporation of the European Convention of Human Rights are equally important. Tony Blair's elevation of his own office leaves room for doubt as to how far he accepts this ideology. If he wants "strong government", he can count us out.

We need honesty in spelling out policies and what they will cost. Last Thursday, Tony Blair, explaining his stakeholder economy on *Newsnight*, was so vague that he seemed to be taking off Roy Bremner taking off Tony Blair. It reminded me of Sherlock Holmes's maxim that "honest men do not conceal their place of business". If Tony Blair wants a coalition, he must come clean and have some policies. Will Labour join us?

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We need honesty in spelling out policies and what they will cost. Last Thursday, Tony Blair, explaining his stakeholder economy on *Newsnight*, was so vague that he seemed to be taking off Roy Bremner taking off Tony Blair. It reminded me of Sherlock Holmes's maxim that "honest men do not conceal their place of business". If Tony Blair wants a coalition, he must come clean and have some policies. Will Labour join us?

Liberalism is about the link between consent, law and liberty. The heart of the matter is that no one should have to be hounded by the arbitrary power of another. This is why issues which to Labour seem unconnected, like unfair dismissal, asylum, judicial review and government power to make law without consent by regulation, are to us part of a single threat. Liberalism was never the anti-state creed of the Thatcher parody; we understand that liberty must be protected both from and by the state.

That means we must reverse the Thatcherite anti-state ideology so brilliantly satirised by Roy Jenkins in a speech last Thursday. We must be prepared to spend money and raise taxes if necessary. Otherwise the next time we are in a tight financial corner we would have to allow the service concerned to go down the route of care in the community and student finance, because it was not admissible to raise taxes to save it.

Liberal Democrats do not think the victims of care in the community or social security disqualification are enjoying liberty. Freedom from starvation is a form of liberty and, when all costs are considered, there is no cheaper alternative to the welfare state. We believe, as Paddy said at Glasgow, that "taxes are the subscription to a civilised society". We think the voters have learnt that lesson the hard way.

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Paddy Ashdown: 'Taxes are the subscription to a civilised society' Photograph: Peter Macdonald



**Yes, Calum Macdonald says: we must end yah-boo politics and co-operate to make government work**

Confrontational politics leads inevitably to a culture of secrecy, to closed minds and to a possessive, indeed manipulative - attitude towards official information. This is because the driving incentive for politicians is, too often, to catch the other fellow on the hop rather than to produce better decisions. The latter requires genuinely open debate in which all views are sought and assimilated as part of the political process.

That is why the case for replacing the knee-jerk adversarial culture of British politics goes wider than the particular interests of Labour and Liberal Democrats. If we aspire to a more open democracy and more efficient government in Britain, a greater emphasis on co-operation and cross-party consensus is an indispensable part of that.

When the German government produces its budget, for example, it first of all sets out a "green budget" which is open to the widest possible debate. Only after many amendments and refinements does the final budget become law. In Britain, by contrast, even most ministers in the government are not aware of the contents of the Budget until it is unveiled in the Chancellor's speech. Thereafter, the Government will strain every sinew to ensure that the entire, complex package goes through months of legislative ritual almost completely unchanged.

The cockpit of Commons debate makes for entertaining theatre, but it is lousy government. This political culture of closed minds is at the root of numerous policy-making debacles in Britain, from the Dangerous Dogs Act to the poll tax.

Of course, there is also a particular case for Labour and Lib Dems now to be co-operating more closely. They both espouse a more open and plural political system and, more widely, there is a growing convergence of policy between the two parties on a broad range of crucial issues. Labour has adopted a wide-ranging constitutional agenda. At the same time, the Lib Dems have taken on a sharper social focus, for example, by embracing the Social Chapter. Investment in our national infrastructure, renewal of public services, a fairer tax system and public responsibility for the environment: in all these key areas, a radical, left-of-centre agenda is emerging which could profoundly transform Britain.

It misses the point to talk of "coalitions". That is too grandiose a term. What is needed is detailed work between the two front benches on specific policies to develop the com-

mon ground which already clearly exists. This should be done carefully, constructively and, above all, naturally. There is no need to force the two parties into artificial consensus. We simply require to break down the artificial and partisan walls that keep politicians unnecessarily apart.

Recent experience in Scotland provides the model for this. After years of discussion, the two parties recently announced a scheme for a new Scottish Assembly to be set up in Edinburgh. The agreed scheme is different in detail from that originally advocated by each party separately, but it embodies their shared commitment to renewing Scottish democracy.

Other areas of policy would reward a similarly constructive and co-operative attitude between the two front benches. The most obvious need is for detailed discussion on how a post-Conservative government will implement the broad democratic revolution - affecting the House of Lords, devolution, a Bill of Rights and even the voting system - to which the two parties are committed.

A joint announcement that the two parties were committed to a constitutional package would greatly increase public support for and confidence in that scheme. It would also deflect critics who argue that the agenda of democratic reform is so ambitious that it will bog down the next Labour (or Labour-led) government.

Talk of using the Liberal Democrats to "prop up" the next Labour government is both silly and unnecessary. The Lib Dems need to focus on a number of key areas and, after discussion with their Labour counterparts, to state that they will work with the Labour Party to implement the legislative fruits of those discussions after the next election. This, of itself, would be a revolutionary act, transforming the agenda for the next election.

The stakes are too high for ritualistic carping from Paddy Ashdown about the Labour Party having no policies. It is time to end yah-boo politics and get down to some serious business.

The writer is Labour MP for the Western Isles and chairman of Labour Initiative on Co-operation (LINC)

Tony Blair: can he lead Labour towards a more constructive kind of politics? Photograph: Reuter

## Why women found Viva such a turn-off

The London radio station run by and for women faces an uphill struggle to survive, argues Mary Braid

Six months after its launch as Britain's first radio station made by women for women, Viva 96.3AM is in crisis. The station's owner, Golden Rose Communications Ltd, has confirmed that Viva's operating budget had been cut, reportedly from £350,000 to £150,000, and that three presenters have been made redundant. The show presented by the flamboyant publicist Lynne Franks, Viva's chairperson and one of its founders, is among those axed.

It is just the latest bad news for the London station, launched amid much razzmatazz by Ms Franks and broadcaster Katy Turner, with the backing of a formidable group of media women including Glenda Bailey, outgoing editor of *Marie Claire* magazine, Carmen Callil, founder of Virago Press, and Barbara Follett, prominent Labour Party lobbyist and wife of the millionaire author Ken. In October it was revealed that Viva had managed to attract just 125,000 listeners, dislodging Greater London Radio from its position at the bottom of the capital's league of listeners.

This weekend, industry insiders were suggesting that Viva must undergo an overhaul or die. So why has the station, billed as the *Marie Claire* of the airwaves, come unstuck

so badly so soon? Viva blames signalling problems in east and central London for most of its current difficulties. Insiders talk of poor management and listeners of weak programming.

But Viva's troubles may rest in something far more fundamental: the rather doubtful premise that a women's station is at all in tune with where women are today or in keeping with the general cultural climate of the Nineties.

The original concept of the music and chat station would appear to have been a magazine format aimed at women aged 30 to 50. It was to be relatively upmarket, pitching for the same audience as the highly successful and envied *Marie Claire*. In Britain, women's magazines sell millions. So why should the concept not be transferred to radio?

The most obvious difference is that, unlike *Marie Claire*, Viva faces the near-impossible task of coming up with fresh angles on "women's stories" every day. In sheer volume terms, *Marie Claire*'s content is a drop in the ocean compared to what is needed to keep Viva on the air. And women's magazines stand more chance than a daily radio programme would of successfully repeating (or repackaging) items without detection.

After a relatively promising first week, it was not long before Viva was degenerating into the boring and banal. Some cringe-making moments have already gone down in media folklore - such as presenter Tara Newley opening her first programme by interviewing Joan Collins, her own mother. Women, it could be argued, are attracted to women's magazines

**Viva faces an almost impossible task in getting daily angles on 'women's stories'**

because other publications fail to cater for their interests. It is certainly true that national newspapers - still editorially dominated by men, particularly at senior level - have a largely male feel. The alienation of women is acknowledged in the continued provision of pages specifically for them - despite these being criticised as ghettos, mere tokenism and out-dated Seventies ideology.

London is the most competitive radio market in the country and its 18

local stations rely on niche ethnic and musical markets. The question is whether women feel strongly enough that other radio stations discriminate against them, or ignore them, to prompt them into switching to a "woman's" station. And, more importantly, whether women form a sufficiently significant homogeneous group to make stations such as Viva a viable proposition. The bad news for Viva may be that radio generally - and certainly the BBC - has taken "feminisation" on board through recruitment and promotional policies and sheer self-awareness.

Viva's uncertain identity was evident at the start in the difference of opinion among its founding females and male executives, about just how male listeners should be considered in the station's programming. The executives' belief that pleasing men was crucial was supported by pre-launch research showing that women tended to turn off the radio if male partners did not like what was on. In this post-feminist age, strident separatists were thin on the ground. Programmes that smacked too much of feminism or were perceived as anti-men were also seen by most women as a turn-off.

If the attitude of Joan Smith, feminist and writer, is shared by many, the sta-

tion faces an uphill struggle to survive with any semblance of vision intact: "I have never listened to Viva or tried to find it and yet I am a woman who listens to radio all the time and is sympathetic to the notion of women getting a good deal. But despite all the advertising, I just can't get the concept. I don't understand what Viva is offering that I cannot already get on Radio 4. Anyway, I believe it is best to work within existing power structures. You have more chance of challenging them."

There are those like Julia Calo, sales director of Independent Radio Sales which sells radio advertising, who believe that Viva was doomed from the start and that its current problems are insoluble: "I and my sales team feel that a women's station is not an appropriate or intelligent concept. It is much too narrow and limiting. There are so many different types of women. Women, in short, form no meaningful single entity and cannot be reached or targeted."

If Viva pitched its appeal too crudely, then its salvation will lie in a much more subtle approach: making "people" the target audience but with women kept in the front of the mind, so the overall tone appeals to females while not alienating males. But it is a fine line to tread.

## Let juries be the judge on fraud

ANOTHER VIEW

Christopher Salloun

recently they were still used to try a wide range of serious, non-terrorist offences.

In 1985 the Roskill Committee recommended removing complex fraud from juries and substituting a fraud trials tribunal consisting of a judge and two lay members specially chosen by the Lord Chancellor for their knowledge of financial matters. "Experts" from the banks and accounting bodies would decide on simple issues such as honesty and dishonesty. There is

something of an Orwellian flavour about government-appointed panels convicting defendants and sentencing them to substantial terms of imprisonment. If the same panels were to acquit, it could lead to allegations of rigging.

It is right that the trial system should be subjected to constant assessment, modernisation and improvement. In 1992, a Bar Working Party under Jeremy Roberts QC suggested, among other things, the setting up of special fraud trial centres presided over by trained judges. It concluded that as long as cases were kept manageable and issues properly presented, the jury sys-

tem should be maintained. It looked at disciplinary proceedings as an alternative to criminal prosecution, with powers to direct financial penalties and compensate those who have suffered loss, and at civil fraud proceedings where the emphasis is on compensation for the victims and punitive damages for dishonesty. None of its recommendations has so far been implemented.

What is important is that the Maxwell trial should not be used to justify the abolition or modification of juries in such cases. If commercial fraud continues to be dealt with as a serious criminal offence, guilt or innocence must be determined by ordinary members of the public.

The writer is chairman of the public affairs committee of the Bar Council

## More women are victims of INTESTACY than DIVORCE

A woman, on average, lives longer than a man. So she is more likely to have to face the difficulties of intestacy - the legal term for being left in a mess because her husband didn't make a Will.

Many men assume that, on their death, all their own will automatically go to their wives. This isn't so. When a man dies intestate, not just his wife but brothers, sisters and even cousins may have a claim on what he owned.

His widow may have to sell the house to pay off his relations. None of this need happen if he makes a will. Yet seven out of ten people fail to take this simple step.

Now, as a service to the public, WWF UK (World Wide Fund For Nature) has produced its own plain language guide to making a will. It explains:

- why everyone needs to make a will
- how to go about it
- and how to minimise tax liability on what you leave behind.

Don't leave it to chance. Give yourself the peace of mind of knowing your loved ones are properly provided for.

Send or phone for our FREE guide to making a Will, today.

Please send me my FREE copy of your guide to Wills and Will-making (allow 28 days for delivery).

Mr Mrs Miss Ms  
Address

Postcode

Enlfield 01 850 125445

**FREE**

WWF

WWF







gather in Brussels for their first meeting under the Italian presidency. Kenneth Clarke will be pushing for progress on the study of the relationship between countries in and outside European monetary union agreed at Madrid.

**Companies**  
**Domino Printing Sciences** had a bad year, with ink supply problems, underperforming acquisitions, two *profit warnings*, three *profit downgrades* and a 38 per cent relative underperformance to the market. NatWest reckons pre-tax profits will be about £5m, compared with £13m last year. The good news: there is probably no more downside after a disastrous 1995. The bad news: there may not be any short-term upside, either.

The flash estimate of national output in the fourth quarter is expected to show growth of 0.4 per cent, the same as in the third quarter, bringing the annual rate of growth down still further to 1.8 per cent. If the economy continues to stutter along at this quarterly rate in the first three months of 1996, it will then have to pick up speed to 0.9 per cent a quarter in the rest of the year if the Government is to achieve its forecast of 3 per cent growth in 1996.

Canada's £3.9bn hostile bid for Forte, the hotels and restaurants group, closes today. But analysts are recommending acceptance of Granada-cash-and-shares offer.

worth about 386p. Granada already holds 9.9 per cent of Forte's shares.

**Interims:** Colefax & Fowler, Daejan Holdings, Scottish National Trust, Surrey Group.

**Finals:** Central Motor Auctions, Derby Trust, Everards Brewery, First Philippine Inv. Masthead Insurance, Shandwick Group, Shani Group, Watson & Philp.

**Business optimism**

% balance

Year	% balance
1986	0
1987	30
1988	15
1989	-10
1990	-35
1991	-55
1992	-10
1993	35
1994	15
1995	10
1996	-10

Source: ENR

**Companies**  
WH Smith Group releases interim results today, with the consensus forecast calling for a halving of pre-tax profits to just £19m from £45m last time, following restructuring charges associated with the company's refurbishment programme.

**The non-EU trade deficit for December will show whether November's improvement was a flash in the pan or whether**

**Companies**  
Shareholders in Airtours will get a chance to question management about last week's announcement of co-operation talks with Carnival, the US cruise operator, at the company's AGM today. Carnival could take up to a 30 per cent stake, at a cost of about £130m. Airtours recently reported its first profits decline in eight years, dropping 22 per cent to £59m after a profits warning in August.

**Companies**  
**Interims:** Aim Group, Caledonian Media, Rubicon Group, Stavert Zigomala.  
**Finals:** Aukett Associates, Partridge Fine Arts.

**Economics**  
**US third-quarter GDP, final release, US fourth-quarter GDP, advance release.**

[illegible]



11th-hour twist: Red faces at hotel group as suggestion of 35% backing breaches Takeover Code just ahead of the deadline

## Takeover Panel rebukes Forte on claim of support

RUSSELL HOTTEN

The Takeover Panel last night rebuked Forte in a final twist to the bitter two-month takeover battle with Granada. It followed comments by Richard Power, Forte's communications head and recent appointment to the main board, that the company had the support of up to 35 per cent of shareholders.

The Panel's intervention will cause acute embarrassment at Forte, as it comes just before tomorrow's bid deadline when the company is seeking the support of last-minute voters.

An 11th-hour attempt to stop Granada's £3.9bn bid will be made today when Whitbread meets the hotel group's largest shareholder, Mercury Asset Management, which has a 14.6 per cent stake.

Granada is thought to have contacted the Panel last night after learning of Mr Power's remarks. Such comments are deemed to be a breach of the Takeover Code as they may "steamroll" shareholders who have not made up their mind. The Takeover Panel immediately contacted Forte's advisers, SBC Warburg, and Mr Power was expected to release a statement late last night retracting his comments. Granada said the remarks were clearly a breach of the code, but declined to comment further.

It is not the first time the Takeover Panel has been involved in this acrimonious takeover battle. It ruled in favour of Granada after Forte complained about comments relating to its profitability. And Forte's finance director, Keith Hamill, had to clarify remarks concerning references to Granada and the 1980s Guinness battle with Distillers.

Whitbread, whose hopes of buying Forte's restaurants business rest on Granada losing, will today outline to MAM why it should throw its weight behind Sir Rocco Forte.

Mr Power said: "Clearly, MAM is important. We think that if Mercury were to come with us it would be quite difficult for Granada to win. Clearly, if Mercury goes with Granada, it is very tight indeed."

MAM's role is so pivotal that there was a suggestion yesterday that the institution may take

the unusual step of issuing a statement to explain which way it voted and why.

However, a spokesman for Mercury said the fund had made no decision on a statement and would decide how to vote only after meeting Whitbread. Whitbread declined to comment on the meeting with MAM, which analysts believe will cast its vote with Granada.

There was also talk this week-end that Whitbread might even buy Forte shares to try to influence the outcome of the bid. But sources were playing down the idea, pointing out that the Forte share price would fall if Granada failed, leaving Whitbread holding a loss on its investment.

Forte believes it has the support of most private shareholders, who own about 15 per cent. On top of that is the Forte family's stake of about 8 per cent, and a number of smaller institutions have pledged support.

Granada holds a 9.99 per cent stake in Forte, and was this week-end said to be canvassing Forte's private shareholders by telephone. Forte said: "We have



Confident: Gerry Robinson yesterday at London Weekend Television - an earlier Granada takeover Photograph: Edward Sykes

a number of employee shareholders who have been contacted."

Forte yesterday released further details of its sale of White Hart Hotels. The Regal Hotel Group has bought 67 of the 72 White Hart outlets for a total

of £122m, a deal that is conditional on the Granada bid failing. On completion, Forte will receive £90m in cash and £32m in 6 per cent redeemable, convertible preference shares in Regal Hotel Group.

But Gerry Robinson, Granada's chief executive, criticised doing such a deal so close to the bid deadline. "This is the type of transaction that will need careful scrutiny given the circumstances in which Forte negotiated this."

The remaining White Hart properties will be converted into Forte Posthouses, and one sold for office redevelopment. The £2.2m proceeds generated by this programme will be used to cut debt, return £800m to shareholders through a share buy-back, and invest in hotels.

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## British Gas set to unveil power station

MARY FAGAN  
Industrial Correspondent

British Gas is poised to announce plans for a 750-megawatt gas-fired power station at Avonmouth, marking its first big move into the electricity generating market place. Its partner in the £300m-£400m project is thought to be Scottish Hydro-Electric, the smaller of the two electricity firms north of the border.

The move is in spite of over-capacity in the generating industry. It is likely to cause consternation at National Power and PowerGen, which have seen their market share sharply eroded since the industry was privatised five years ago.

The British Gas initiative comes at a controversial time as the station could help mop up some of the excess gas that has thrown the company into turmoil in recent months. British Gas has estimated liabilities of about £1.5bn related to long-term contracts with North Sea producers which are forcing the company to buy much more gas than it can sell, and to buy it above today's market price.

The so-called "bubble" of excess gas has caused chaos in the industry because British Gas has asked the Government to make others share its financial pain. The crunch is expected to come this week with a decision by ministers on whether it may impose a levy on British Gas's rival suppliers - and therefore on consumers - to help offset the liabilities. Provision for a levy would be enshrined in the new licences being drafted for all public gas supply companies so that it could easily be imposed at a future date.

Rival suppliers to British Gas, including offshore companies and electricity firms, are already incensed at proposals for a levy and may use the power project to argue that British Gas will have a further outlet for its gas and has over-stated its predicament. Some oil and gas companies allege that British Gas is exaggerating its potential liabilities to win the sympathy of the Government.

The Gas Consumers Council is also concerned that the matter be investigated independently and has called in vain for an inquiry by the House of Commons Trade and Industry Committee. The GCC has said any levy could cost each household in the UK at least £45.

The problem with the gas contracts is acknowledged as being one of the most serious faced by the company. Clare Spottiswoode, the industry watchdog, said last year that it could threaten British Gas's financial security.

Tim Eggar, Minister for Energy and Industry, has called repeatedly on British Gas and the North Sea producers to renegotiate contracts in the interests of the industry, but to no avail.

DAVID USBORNE

## G7 ministers talk up the dollar

MARY DEJEVSKY  
Paris  
and PAUL WALLACE

The dollar is expected to make further gains in the foreign exchange markets after determined efforts by finance ministers and central bank governors from the Group of Seven industrial countries to talk up its value. The G7 is hoping that a stronger dollar would bring relief to European economies hit hard by the strength of their currencies.

The ministers, who met in Paris over the weekend, acknowledged for the first time the seriousness of the economic slowdown in Europe. The Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, said that growth in the UK was "well below trend".

Lawrence Summers, US Deputy Treasury Secretary, said: "We very much want to see a strong dollar. A strong dollar is very much in our interest." Hans Tietmeyer, president of the German Bundesbank, said that the correction in the parity

of the dollar since last April still had further to go.

Mr Summers said that the G7 viewed the slowdown in European economic growth as a source of concern, but believed it was temporary. Mr Clarke said France and Germany had both set out specific measures they intended to take to

stimulate growth in their countries.

The emphasis on growth marked a break from the usual concentration by the G7 on structural reforms, such as the reduction in budget deficits. While the Group stressed the need for continued fiscal retrenchment in the medium

term, it also put new stress on the need for policies designed to sustain growth and jobs.

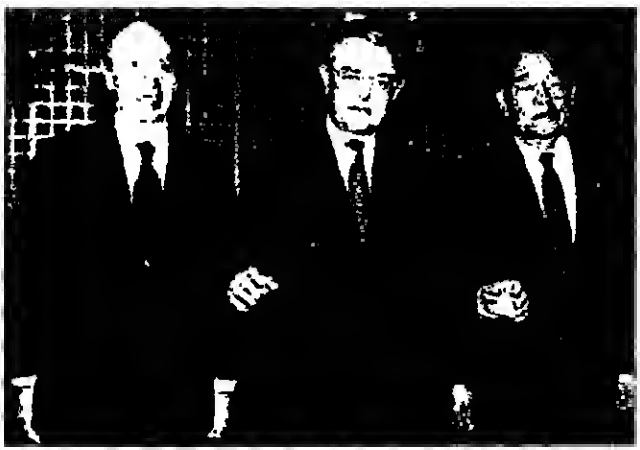
The French Finance Minister, Jean Arthuis, said ministers had agreed they would take action where necessary to keep the recovery going. The most important thing was to generate confidence.

He added he was hopeful that there would be further cuts in interest rates.

Although Mr Tietmeyer made clear that the Bundesbank had no plans to reduce German interest rates soon, the German government is planning a package to boost jobs, including cuts in employer insurance contributions.

Theo Waigel, the German Finance Minister, said that the rigidity of European labour markets was an important cause of weak growth in Europe.

Much of the meeting was taken up with debate over how to tackle the unemployment crisis in the developed world in the run up to the Group of Seven jobs summit in Lille in April.



Group of three: (left to right) Italian Prime Minister Lamberto Dini, French Finance Minister Jean Arthuis and Japanese Finance Minister Wataru Kubo at the weekend Photograph: AP

## Railtrack wins compensation for penalties on late trains

PETER RODGERS  
Business Editor

Railtrack has won a compensation package to cover penalty payments imposed by the rail regulator for late-running trains, worth more than £80m a year for the first two years.

First details of the financial impact of the performance regime under which John Swift, the regulator, sets penalties for failure to deliver services promised to train operating companies, will come with the interim results tomorrow.

Without compensation, Railtrack's profits would be much less attractive to investors in the flotation in May, which is expected to raise up to £2bn.

The results will show that the compensation payment of just over £40m in the first half of the 1995-6 financial year - rising to more than £80m in the full year to this March - will cover most of the cost of the penalty.

In the first six months to last September of the company's financial year, the compensation will be not far short of half the expected interim profits before tax of about £95m. The interim profits are expected to show little change of trend from last year. They will be about half the £189m before tax made in the full year to last March.

The compensation package is expected to be slightly larger in the following year to March 1997, but will then begin to tail off over several years, leaving more of the cost of delays and missed timetables to be borne by the privatised company.

Railtrack argued successfully for a phasing in of the cost of the penalties up to 2001, after which the full performance regime will bite. It insisted in negotiations that without a cushion it would have difficulty financing its £1bn-a-year investment programme.

Furthermore, the Government has agreed that tax losses can be passed from British Rail

to Railtrack, as inheritor of the railway infrastructure, which means the tax charge over the next few years will be minimal, and some analysts think there could even be a tax credit this year. This will boost the company's bottom-line earnings.

And on Friday, the rail regulator agreed in principle to allow Railtrack to keep 75 per cent of any profits it makes on its property portfolio.

The greatest pressure to ease the impact of the performance penalties is the effect they would have had on earnings and dividends. The City will want a substantial dividend yield.

Meanwhile, Bob Horton, chairman of Railtrack, said in an interview with the *Independent* that the company might negotiate with train operators to cut back on weekend maintenance and the accompanying disruption to timetables. This would help to sell more tickets. Interview, page 17

## Beleaguered airlines emerge from \$13bn hell in the heavens

Think the industry you are in has been a bit brutal of late? Boss a bit obsessive about cutting costs? Your company's rivals a touch more aggressive than they used to be? Not certain whether the old place will still be there in a month or two?

Well, your experience is probably as nothing compared with that of employees of the big US airlines over recent years. Hell in the heavens might just about describe it.

Just look at the carnage. Some of the most famous names of American aviation have been vapourised: Pan American, Eastern and Braniff among them. Others, such as TWA, have staggered in and out of bankruptcy.

Over five years from 1989, the US airline industry contrived to lose a fearful \$13bn. Robert Crandall, the sharp-edged chief executive at American Airlines, was conceding only a short few months ago that he would not mind selling up entirely given

the awful state of the industry. The battle for survival has, understandably, been intense. It was Mr Crandall again who remarked: "The game we play is closest to the old game of Christians and lions."

With every management scrambling to cut overheads, it was generally the employees who were turned into cat food. At Eastern Airlines, union members, so accustomed to being asked for ever-more painful concessions, coined the acronym Bohica - Bend Over Here It Comes Again.

Now there is convincing evidence the worst may be over. As a group, the main US carriers are on track to have made money in 1995, ending their streak of losses. Delta, Northwest, American and United all came out ahead.

While cost-cutting played the biggest part, the turnaround was helped also by fares that stayed relatively high and traffic which rose 2.4 per cent over 1994.

Most importantly, load factors on the 10 largest US airlines rose 0.8 to 67.3 per cent.

Even the clouds at USAir might be revealing a silver lining. The company is expected to announce this morning that it, too, has rebounded from five straight years of losses totalling \$3bn with a profit for 1995.

When USAir first mentioned it was on course for a profit last September, its share price shot up 25 per cent. One dampener on the celebrations will be the news last week from British Airways that it is declining to exercise an option to increase its 24.6 per cent holding in the company to 34.8 per cent because of the continuing deadlock in Anglo-American negotiations on liberalising access to markets and raising US limits on foreign ownership of its carriers.

Something else will be new at

USAir today: from this morning it will have Stephen Wolf as its new chief executive. The appointment of Mr Wolf has thrilled analysts and investors.

Formerly the boss of four airlines - Continental, Republic, Tiger International and United Airlines - the lanky Californian

is "Mr Turnaround" of the airline world.

At United he engineered a \$5bn employee buyout that has seen the airline return to profit and overtake American as the country's largest carrier.

Most carriers expect 1996 to be much like last year. There are still no serious fare wars in sight, and with a generally healthy US economy, traffic projections look good.

The main carriers "are acting

very rationally as far as adding capacity is concerned", says Ray Neidl, an aviation analyst at Furman, Selz. "I hope they maintain that."

Dangers, however, still lurk. Not everybody, for example, is certain that Mr Wolf will be able to work his old magic so easily on USAir, which still has the highest operating costs in the industry and famously tough unions. It will not help him that US-Air's pilots have an agreement in their pockets barring any layoffs before 1 July 1997.

Among the sceptics is Michael Boyd, an aviation consultant in Colorado. "It looks like they [USAir] looked for an outside Messiah to save their company," he said last week. "But former airline executives are like plants. They usually don't report very well."

And there are potentially dangerous labour disputes brewing at some of the other carriers also. The pilots' union at American Airlines asked last week for federal mediators to step in to end an 18-month impasse in negotiations with management for a new contract.

And at Delta Air, the pilots' union has said it is preparing to ballot members on strike measures because of deadlocked talks with management.

Another worry for the big lines is the progress of their short-hop, no-frills competitors, such as Dallas-based Southwest Airlines. Led by its founder, Herb Kelleher, it has made extraordinary inroads, serving 23 US states and poised to replace TWA as America's seventh-largest carrier.

Tomorrow, Mr Kelleher will inaugurate new routes to Florida, representing a serious threat to the east coast stronghold of USAir. Less visible but growing even faster is ValuJet, based in Atlanta.

Most damaged by its sudden

ascendancy is Delta. The violent bumps of the first half of the decade are more or less over. But the seat-belt sign is likely to stay on a while yet.

DAVID USBORNE

## VIEW FROM NEW YORK

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Most damaged by its sudden

STOCK MARKETS									
FTSE 100									
Index	Close	Week's chg	Change %	1995/96 High	1995/96 Low	Ytd %	1994/95 High	1994/95 Low	Ytd %
FTSE 100	3748.40	+91.1	+2.5	3748.70	2954.20	3.81	3748.70	2954.20	3.81
FTSE 250	4073.60	+49.0	+1.2	4080.10	3300.80	3.60	4080.10	3300.80	3.60
FTSE 350	1858.80	+40.4	+2.2	1858.80	1462.40	3.77	1858.80	1462.40	3.77
FT Small Cap	1988.13	+18.8	+1.0	1993.11	1678.61	3.14	1993.11	1678.61	3.14
FT All Share	1831.53	+38.1	+2.1	1831.53	1469.28	3.72	1831.53	1469.28	3.72
New York	5184.68	+123.6	+2.4	5216.47	3832.08	2.29	5216.47	3832.08	2.29
Tokyo	20365.76	+78.3	+0.4	20669.03	14485.41	0.751	20669.03	14485.41	0.751
Hong Kong	10764.09	+224.1	+2.1	10764.09	8967.93	3.531	10764.09	8967.93	3.531
Frankfurt	2398.76	+42.3	+1.8	2398.76	1910.96	1.871	2398.76	1910.96	1.871

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES									
UK interest rates									
1 month	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58
3 months	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58
6 months	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58
1 year	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58
2 year	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58
3 year	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58
5 year	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58
10 year	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58
15 year	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58
20 year	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58
25 year	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58
30 year	5.47	5.13	5.58	7.82	6.01	7.90	5.47	5.13	5.58

CURRENCIES									
£/\$									
Index	Close	Week's chg	Change %	1995/96 High	1995/96 Low	Ytd %	1994/95 High	1994/95 Low	Ytd %
\$ (London)	1.5105	-3.67c	-1.6645	1.5105	1.4620	+1.57	1.5105	1.4620	+1.57
\$ (New York)	1.5080	-3.85c	-1.5695	1.5080	1.4620	+1.65	1.5080	1.4620	+1.65
DM (London)	2.2340	+0.51p	2.425	2.2340	1.4790	+3.83p	2.2340	1.4790	+3.83p
¥ (London)	159.094	+3.48t	156.09	¥ (London)	105.325	+10.245	99.77	105.325	+10.245
₹ (London)	82.8	-0.5	88.5	₹ (London)	85.7	+1.1	96.1	85.7	+1.1

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22 January 1996







## news

## Saddle up! The future rides on a zorse

**Born to run:** A cross between a horse and a zebra may revolutionise equine pursuits

REBECCA FOWLER

He has a slate brown coat fit for any horse, and stripes a zebra would be proud of. This is the zorse, the latest product of cross-equine breeding and "the horse of the future" according to his owner.

The six-month-old foal, named White Cloud, is the offspring of a Grant's zebra and a mare who was artificially inseminated in California, as part of the experimental breeding programme.

Diane Richards, who breeds horses in Big Bear City, hopes White Cloud will combine the best attributes of both animals. The horse is placid and receptive to training, while the zebra is known for its strength and endurance.

"The possibilities are endless. If you breed zebras with a thoroughbred they'll be jumping and running, and with Quarter horses they can be used for cutting and leisure riding," Miss Richards said. "A breeder with 28 Arabian racehorses wants to get some of these on the race circuit."

While zebras have been successfully crossed with ponies and donkeys in the past to produce "zonies" and "zebroids" it is unusual to cross one with a horse, which is significantly larger.

This makes zorse breeding a delicate process. The animals would not mate naturally because of the difference in size. The hybrid zorse is also infertile, because horses and zebras belong to the same genus, equus, which dates back 58 million years, but are different species and have a different number of chromosomes.

Although there have been rare cases of mules, a cross between a donkey and a horse, naturally producing offspring in China and Brazil, the zorse would always be dependent on artificial help to breed.

There is also concern that the different temperaments of the two animals will not complement each other. The horse was domesticated 6,000 years ago, while the zebra still runs wild and is aggressive.

"It's the same sort of relationship between a jackal and a wolf, and this kind of interbreeding happens naturally in wildlife parks in Africa between zebras and donkeys," said Dr Juliet Clutton-Brock of the Natural History Museum.

"But you can't really domesticate zebras, they would not be dominated by humans. The behaviour patterns are very different and I'm not sure where this exercise would lead you."

The challenge of crossing zebras and horses has fascinated biologists since the last century, and the Victorians produced a series of crossbreeds.

The most famous work was conducted by Professor Cossar Ewart in the 1890s. He was anxious to solve the problem of telegony, a theory whereby Victorian dog breeders were convinced if their pedigrees mated with mongrels they would be contaminated for ever, even if they were crossed with another pedigree in the future.

More recently academics crossed zebras and horses in Britain for research into why the body does not reject an embryo, even though it consists of material that is foreign to it.

Professor WR Allen, an expert in equine breeding at Cambridge University, is sceptical that Miss Richards' programme will produce a superior horse. "These experiments to see whether the hybrid will show useful characteristics if you cross the two animals are limited," Prof Allen said.

"A zebra is a fat little thing, and it's no more useful in producing a superior racing creature than I am."

There is also concern among the horse racing fraternity at suggestions the zorse could be introduced to the competitive racing world. Experts in Britain are adamant it would not be welcome.

"How very inelegant, poor creature. A thoroughbred is such a graceful animal, and zebras are so beautiful in their own right, why would you want to mix them?" asked a spokesman for the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association.

Since all racing horses are registered in the International Stud Book, a passport to compete, after owners have proved they are descendants of the world's three original thoroughbreds from the Middle East, the zorse may struggle to find any competitors.

According to the British Horse Racing Board, the sports governing body, zorse breeders would have to hold alternative racing events, similar to those run for Arabian horses. "There is no question of these animals being registered, because you simply could not name the mother or father as a zebra," said Simon Clare, executive assistant of the Board. "I certainly don't think we'll be seeing a zorse winning the Gold Cup at Cheltenham this year."



Striped issue: Diane Richards in California with the 'zorse' she has bred. Photographs: Carol Cheetham-Kron



Mix and match: the zebra and the horse

► 44 chromosomes  
► Size: 120cm to 140cm in height  
► Aggressive and undomesticated  
► Distinguished by stripes, which are believed to confuse predators when they are being chased  
► Live in small family groups  
► Originally from East Africa  
► Lifespan: Up to 25 years

► 64 chromosomes  
► Size: 150cm to 190cm in height  
► Domesticated and receptive to humans  
► Long soft mane  
► Its ancestor, the wild horse, occupied Europe across into central Asia  
► Lifespan: Up to 40 years

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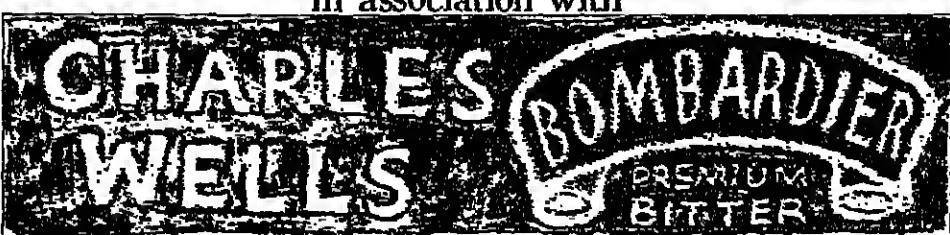
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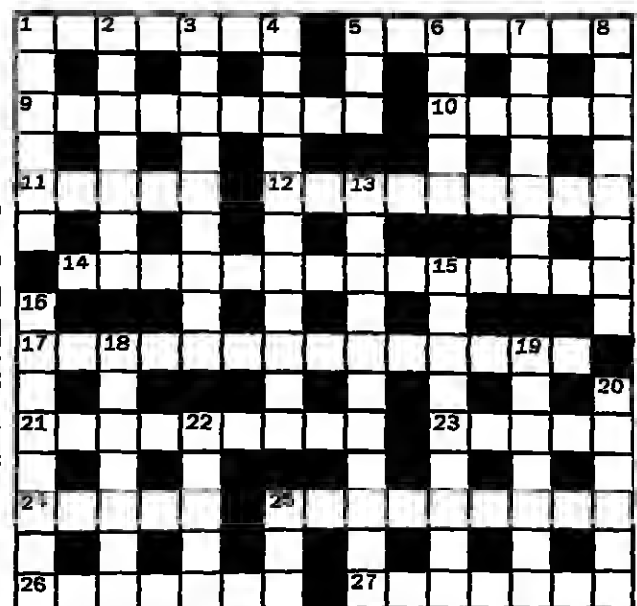
### THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

in association with



No. 2889, Monday 22 January

By Portia



**ACROSS**  
1 Tom's noticed carrying power tool (4,3)  
5 Second game finished inside (7)  
9 Best pay the bill for Hogmanay visitor (5,4)  
10 Sounds like appropriate alloy (5)  
11 Square sort of sign (5)  
12 Elaborate stitch (9)  
14 Garden plant that's light to move around (7,7)

17 Graduate's unsettled after bar school (8,2,4)  
21 Putting high explosive in danger - get a grip! (7,2)  
23 Trouble caused by hearing (5)  
24 Divert a large number on purpose (5)  
25 Foolishly made it up about pupil's wide range (9)  
26 Jumpers may be put on here (7)

27 One is sorry to have them (7)

#### DOWN

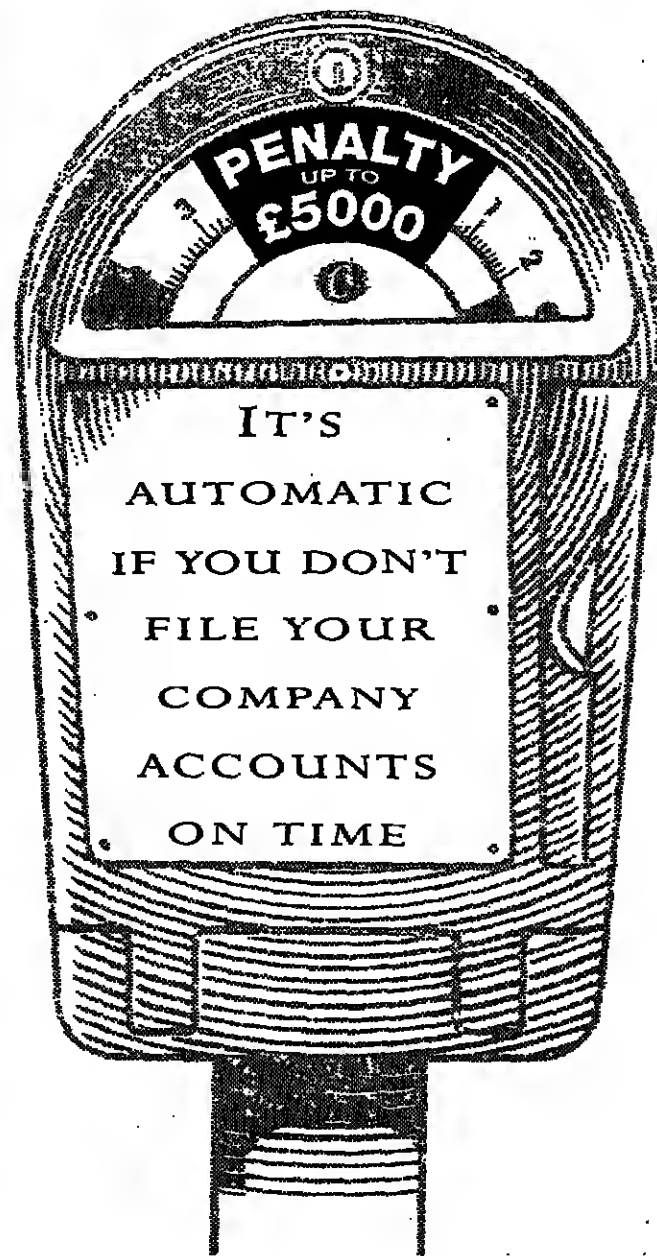
1 Hold out note before getting container (6)  
2 Connected from end to end (7)  
3 Uncle Pat upset by European showing ill-humour (9)  
4 Booby prize that creates a stir? (6,5)  
5 Perch is in position (3)  
6 Quarter put in favourite duck sauce (5)  
7 Deliveries expected to be late (7)  
8 Rattle on about being liberal (8)  
13 Return ticket for those standing? (6,5)  
15 Eight ran off following Pole's narrow escape (4,5)  
16 Art form that lacks substance? (8)  
18 Caught a fiend, we hear, in an anorak (7)  
19 Race is interrupted by a French official (7)  
20 They can cut right between layers (6)  
22 Time to take on Midland banker (5)  
25 Audibly suffer from drink (3)

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But what you may not realise is that if you deliver your accounts late your company will be penalised - automatically. Delay too long, and the penalty could be as much as £1000 for private limited companies and £5000 for PLC's.

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Filing on time makes sound business sense. Other companies may soon lose confidence in yours if your records aren't up to date.

Examples of some deadlines for existing private limited companies are shown below:

Company Accounting Reference Date	Deadline for delivery to Companies House (Private Companies)
31 March 1995	31 January 1996
30 April 1995	29 February 1996
31 May 1995	31 March 1996

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